HARRISON's COLLECTION.

BRITISH CLASSICKS

THE IDLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

DUPLEX LIBELLI DOS EST, QUOD RISUM MOVET.
ET QUOD PRUDENTI VITAM CONSILIO MONET.

PHAEDRUS.

Χάρις μικροῖσι.

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FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE IDLER having omitted to diſtinguiſh the Eſſays of his Correſpondents by any particular ſignature, thinks it neceſſary to inform his Readers, that from the ninth, the fifteenth, thirty-third, forty-ſecond, fifty-fourth, ſixty-ſeventh, ſeventy-ſixth, ſeventy-ninth, eighty-ſecond, ninety-third, ninety-ſixth, and ninety-eighth Papers, he claims no other praiſe than that of having given them to the Publick.

THE

IDLER.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

N° I. SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1758.

VACUI SUB UMBRA
LUSIMUS. HOR.

THOSE who attempt periodical Eſſays ſeem to be often ſtopped in the beginning, by the difficulty of finding a proper title. Two writers, ſince the time of the Spectator, have aſſumed his name, without any pretenſions to lawful inheritance; an effort was once made to revive the Tatler; and the ſtrange appellations, by which other papers have been called, ſhew that the authors were diſtreſſed, like the natives of America, who come to the Europeans to beg a name.

It will be eaſily believed of the Idler, that if this title had required any ſearch, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniencies. The Idler, who habituates himſelf to be ſatisfied with what he can moſt eaſily obtain, not only eſcapes labours which are often fruitleſs, but ſometimes ſucceeds better than thoſe who deſpiſe all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired.

If ſimilitude of manners be a motive to kindneſs, the Idler may flatter himſelf with univerſal patronage. There is no ſingle character under which ſuch numbers are compriſed. Every man is, or hopes to be, an Idler. Even thoſe who ſeem to differ moſt from us are haſtening to increaſe our fraternity? as peace is the end of war, ſo to be idle is the ultimate purpoſe of the buſy.

There is perhaps no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human ſpecies. It has been found hard to deſcribe Man by an adequate definition. Some philoſophers have called him a reaſonable animal, but others have conſidered reaſon as a quality of which many creatures partake. He has been termed likewiſe a laughing animal; but it is ſaid that ſome men have never laughed. Perhaps Man may be more properly diſtinguiſhed as an Idle animal; for there is no man who is not ſometimes idle. It is at leaſt a definition from which none that ſhall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the Idler.

That the definition may be compleat, Idleneſs muſt be not only the general, but the peculiar characteriſtic of man; and perhaps man is the only being that can properly be called Idle, that does by others what he might do himſelf, or ſacrifices duty or pleaſure to the love of eaſe.

Scarcely

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which leſs envy or competition is to be dreaded. The Idler has no rivals or enemies. The man of buſineſs forgets him; the man of enterprize deſpiſes him; and though ſuch as tread the ſame track of life, fall commonly into jealouſy and diſcord, Idlers are always found to aſſociate in peace; and he who is moſt famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as himſelf.

What is to be expected from this Paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, ſerious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will enquire. That the Idler has ſome ſcheme, cannot be doubted; for to form ſchemes is the Idler's privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown ſparing of communication, having obſerved, that his hearers are apt to remember what he forgets himſelf; that his tardineſs of execution expoſes him to the encroachments of thoſe who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very ſpecious plans, after long contrivance and pompous diſplays, have ſubſided in wearineſs without a trial, and without miſcarriage have been blaſted by deriſion.

Something the Idler's character may be ſuppoſed to promiſe. Thoſe that are curious after diminutive hiſtory, who watch the revolutions of families, and the riſe and fall of characters either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this Paper; for the Idler is always inquiſitive, and ſeldom retentive. He that delights in obliquy and ſatire, and wiſhes to ſee clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with it's brightneſs, will ſnatch up the Idler's Eſſays with a beating heart. The Idler is naturally cenſorious; thoſe who attempt nothing themſelves think every thing eaſily performed, and conſider the unſucceſsful always as criminal.

I think it neceſſary to give notice, that I make no contract, nor incur any obligation. If thoſe who depend on the Idler for intelligence and entertainment, ſhould ſuffer the diſappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themſelves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be caſt away. The Idler, though ſluggiſh, is yet alive, and may ſometimes be ſtimulated to vigour and activity. He may deſcend into profoundneſs, or tower into ſublimity; for the diligence of an Idler is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But theſe vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correſpondent, who ſhall enable him to pleaſe without his own labour. He excludes no ſtyle, he prohibits no ſubjects; only let him that writes to the Idler remember, that his letters muſt not be long; no words are to be ſquandered in declarations of eſteem, or confeſſions of inability; conſcious dulneſs has little right to be prolix, and praiſe is not ſo welcome to the Idler as quiet.

N° II. SATURDAY, APRIL 22.

TOTO VIX QUATER ANNO
MEMBRANAM HOR.

MANY poſitions are often on the tongue, and ſeldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often diſappointed; yet diſappointment ſeldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral ſentence, or peeviſh exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wiſh to advance rather by the impulſe of the wind, than the ſtrokes of the oar; and many founder in the paſſage, while they lie waiting for the gale that is to waft them to their wiſh.

It will naturally be ſuſpected that the Idler has lately ſuffered ſome diſappointment, and that he does not talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is required to betray his own ſecrets. I will, however, confeſs, that I have now been a Writer almoſt a week, and have not yet heard a ſingle word of praiſe, nor received one hint from any correſpondent.

Whence

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able to diſcover. Many of my predeceſſors have thought themſelves obliged to return their acknowledgments in the ſecond paper, for the kind reception of the firſt; and in a ſhort time, apologies have become neceſſary to thoſe ingenious gentlemen and ladies, whoſe performances, though in the higheſt degree elegant and learned, have been unavoidably delayed.

What, then, will be thought of me, who, having experienced no kindneſs, have no thanks to return; whom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give any cauſe of diſcontent, and who have therefore no opportunity of ſhewing how ſkilfully I can pacify reſentment, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejection?

I have long known, that ſplendor of reputation is not to be counted among the neceſſaries of life; and therefore ſhall not much repine if praiſe be with-held till it is better deſerved. But ſurely I may be allowed to complain that, in a nation of Authors, not one has thought me worthy of notice, after ſo fair an invitation.

At the time when the rage of writing has ſeized the old and young, when the cook warbles her lyres in the kitchen, and the thraſher vociferates his heroics in the barn; when our traders deal out knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forſake their ſamplers to teach kingdoms wiſdom; it may ſeem very unneceſſary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I ſhould be indeed unwilling to find that, for the ſake of correſponding with the Idler, the ſmith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the ſpinſter's diſtaff ſtood unemployed. I ſolicit only the contributions of thoſe who have already devoted themſelves to literature, or, without any determinate attention, wander at large through the expanſe of life; and wear out the day in hearing at one place, what they utter at another.

Of theſe, a great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exerciſes his powers; whoſe paſſions he raiſes and depreſſes; whoſe underſtanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or ſtrengthens by argument; whoſe admiration he courts, whoſe praiſes he enjoys; and who ſerves him inſtead of a ſenate or a theatre; as the young ſoldiers in the Roman camp learned the uſe of their weapons by fencing again a poſt in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with eſſays, and epigrams, which he reads, from houſe to houſe, to ſelect parties; and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to with-hold no longer from the impatience of the public.

If, among theſe, any one is perſuaded that, by ſuch preludes of compoſition, he has qualified himſelf to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of thoſe cenſures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate againſt public pretenders to fame, he may, by tranſmitting his performances to the Idler, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the pleaſure of ſucceſs, without the hazard of miſcarriage.

Many advantages, not generally known, ariſe from this method of ſtealing on the public. The ſtanding author of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be aſcribed to his aſſiſtants. It does not much alter the event, that the author and his correſpondents are equally unknown; for the author, whoever he be, is an individual, of whom every reader has ſome fixed idea, and whom he is therefore unwilling to gratify with applauſe; but the praiſes given to his correſpondents are ſcattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to beſtow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own: ſuch ſecrecy is indeed very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is ſcarcely to be imagined, at how ſmall an expence he may grow conſiderable.

A perſon of quality, by a ſingle paper, may engroſs the honour of a volume. Fame is indeed dealt with a hand leſs and leſs bounteous through the ſubordinate ranks, till it deſcends to the profeſſed author, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deſerves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters

in the year ſent to the Idler, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the firſt rank of writers by thoſe who are weary of the preſent race of wits, and wiſh to ſink them into obſcurity before the luſtre of a name not yet known enough to be deteſted.

N° III. SATURDAY, APRIL 29.

OTIA VITÆ
SOLAMUR CANTU. STAT.

IT has long been the complaint of thoſe who frequent the theatres, that all the dramatic art has been long exhauſted, and that the viciſſitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been ſhewn in every poſſible combination, till the firſt ſcene informs us of the laſt, and the play no ſooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conſpiracy is formed in a tragedy, we gueſs by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy, we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and ſentiment, which are to make their way as they can, without the ſoft anxiety of ſuſpence, or the enlivening agitation of ſurprize.

A new paper lies under the ſame diſadvantage as a new play. There is danger leſt it be new without novelty. My earlier predeceſſors had their choice of vices and follies, and ſelected ſuch as were moſt likely to raiſe merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unſurveyed; characters of every kind ſhot up in their way, and thoſe of the moſt luxuriant growth, or moſt conſpicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the firſt ſickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to note the caſual varieties of the ſame ſpecies, and to recommend themſelves by minute induſtry, and diſtinctions too ſubtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen, that the haſte or negligence of the firſt enquirers, has left enough behind to reward another ſearch; ſometimes new objects ſtart up under the eye, and he that is looking for one kind of matter, is amply gratified by the diſcovery of another. But ſtill it muſt be allowed, that, as more is taken, leſs can remain, and every truth brought newly to light, impoveriſhes the mine, from which ſucceeding intellects are to dig their treaſures.

Many philoſophers imagine that the elements themſelves may be in time exhauſted; that the ſun, by ſhining long, will effuſe all it's light; and that, by the continual waſte of aqueous particles, the whole earth will at laſt become a ſandy deſart.

I would not adviſe my readers to diſturb themſelves by contriving how they ſhall live without light and water. For the days of univerſal thirſt and perpetual darkneſs are at a great diſtance. The ocean and the ſun will laſt our time, and we way leave poſterity to ſhift for themſelves.

But if the ſtores of Nature are limited, much more narrow bounds muſt be ſet to the modes of life; and mankind may want a moral or amuſing paper, many years before they ſhall be deprived of drink or day-light. This want, which to the buſy and the inventive may ſeem eaſily remediable by ſome ſubſtitute or other, the whole race of Idlers will feel with all the ſenſibility that ſuch torpid animals can ſuffer.

When I conſider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of deſire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till ſome external impulſe puts them in motion; who awake in the morning, vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which ſome kind eſſayiſt has been accuſtomed to ſupply; I am moved by the commiſeration with which all human beings ought to behold the diſtreſſes of each other, to try ſome expedients for their relief, and to enquire by what methods the liſtleſs may be actuated, and the empty be repleniſhed.

There are ſaid to be pleaſures in madneſs known only to madmen. There are certainly miſeries in idleneſs, which the Idler only can conceive. Theſe miſeries I have often felt, and often bewailed. I know, by experience, how welcome is every avocation

that

that ſummons the thoughts to a new image; and how much langour and laſſitude are relieved by that officiouſneſs which offers a momentary amuſement to him who is unable to find it for himſelf.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, ſo they are but entertained. They catch, with equal eagerneſs at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might therefore eaſily be pleaſed, if they conſulted only their own minds; but thoſe who will not take the trouble to think for themſelves, have always ſomebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty in writing is to pleaſe thoſe from whom others learn to be pleaſed.

Much miſchief is done in the world with very little intereſt or deſign. He that aſſumes the character of a critic, and juſtifies his claim by perpetual cenſure, imagines that he is hurting none but the author, and him he conſiders as a peſtilent animal, whom every other being has a right to perſecute; little does he think how many harmleſs men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not underſtand; or how many honeſt minds he debars from pleaſure, by exciting an artificial faſtidiouſneſs, and making them too wiſe to concur with their own ſenſations. He who is taught by a critic to diſlike that which pleaſed him in his natural ſtate, has the ſame reaſon to complain of his inſtructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who, when he thought himſelf maſter of Peru, phyſicked him to poverty.

If men will ſtruggle againſt their own advantage, they are not to expect that the Idler will take much pains upon them; he has himſelf to pleaſe as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleaſure of others too neceſſary to his own.

N° IV. SATURDAY, MAY 6.

Πάντας γὰρ φιλέεσκε. HOM.

CHARITY, or tenderneſs for the poor, which is now juſtly conſidered, by a great part of mankind, as inſeparable from piety, and in which almoſt all the goodneſs of the preſent age conſiſts, is, I think, known only to thoſe who enjoy, either immediately or by tranſmiſſion, the light of revelation.

Thoſe ancient nations who have given us the wiſeſt models of government, and the brighteſt examples of patriotiſm, whoſe inſtitutions have been tranſcribed by all ſucceeding legiſlators, and whoſe hiſtory is ſtudied by every candidate for political or military reputation, have yet left behind them no mention of almshouſes or hoſpitals, of places where age might repoſe, or ſickneſs be relieved.

The Roman emperors, indeed, gave large donatives to the citizens and ſoldiers, but theſe diſtributions were always reckoned rather popular than virtuous: nothing more was intended than an oſtentation of liberality, nor was any recompence expected, but ſuffrages and acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occaſional; he that ceaſed to need the favour of the people, ceaſed likewiſe to court it; and therefore, no man thought it either neceſſary or wiſe to make any ſtanding proviſion for the needy, to look forwards to the wants of poſterity, or to ſecure ſucceſſions of charity, for ſucceſſions of diſtreſs.

Compaſſion is by ſome reaſoners, on whom the name of philoſophers has been too eaſily conferred, reſolved into an affection merely ſelfiſh, an involuntary perception of pain at the involuntary ſight of a being like ourſelves languiſhing in miſery. But this ſenſation, if ever it be felt at all from the brute inſtinct of uninſtructed nature, will only produce effects deſultory and tranſient; it will never ſettle into a principle of action, or extend relief to calamities unſeen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the ſuccour of the poor, is a height of virtue, to which humanity has never riſen by it's own power. The charity of the

Mahometans is a precept which their teacher evidently tranſplanted from the doctrines of Chriſtianity; and the care with which ſome of the Oriental ſects attend, as is ſaid, to the neceſſities of the diſeaſed and indigent, may be added to the other arguments, which prove Zoroaſter to have borrowed his inſtitutions from the law of Moſes.

The preſent age, though not likely to ſhine hereafter among the moſt ſplendid periods of hiſtory, has yet given examples of Charity, which may be very properly recommended to imitation. The equal diſtribution of wealth, which long commerce has produced, does not enable any ſingle hand to raiſe edifices of piety like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to religious uſes, or deal out ſuch large and laſting beneficence as was ſcattered over the land in ancient times, by thoſe who poſſeſſed counties or provinces. But no ſooner is a new ſpecies of miſery brought to view, and a deſign of relieving it profeſſed, than every hand is open to contribute ſomething, every tongue is buſied in ſolicitation, and every art of pleaſure is employed for a time in the intereſt of virtue.

The moſt apparent and preſſing miſeries incident to man, have now their peculiar houſes of reception and relief; and there are few among us raiſed however little above the danger of poverty, who may not juſtly claim, what is implored by the Mahometans in their moſt ardent benedictons, the prayers of the poor.

Among thoſe actions which the mind can moſt ſecurely review with unabated pleaſure, is that of having contributed to an hoſpital for the ſick. Of ſome kinds of Charity the conſequences are dubious; ſome evils which beneficence has been buſy to remedy, are not certainly known to be very grievous to the ſufferer, or detrimental to the community; but no man can queſtion whether wounds and ſickneſs are not really painful; whether it be not worthy of a good man's care to reſtore thoſe to eaſe and uſefulneſs, from whoſe labour infants and women expect their bread, and who, by a caſual hurt, or lingering diſeaſe, lie pining in want and anguiſh, burthenſome to others, and weary of themſelves.

Yet as the hoſpitals of the preſent time ſubſiſt only by gifts beſtowed at pleaſure, without any ſolid fund of ſupport, there is danger leſt the blaze of Charity, which now burns with ſo much heat and ſplendour, ſhould die away for want of laſting fuel; leſt Faſhion ſhould ſuddenly withdraw her ſmile, and Inconſtancy transfer the public attention to ſomething which may appear more eligible, becauſe it will be new.

Whatever is left in the hands of Chance muſt be ſubject to viciſſitude; and when any eſtabliſhment is found to be uſeful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent.

But man is a tranſitory being, and his deſigns muſt partake of the imperfections of their author. To confer duration is not always in our power. We muſt ſnach the preſent moment, and employ it well, without too much ſolicitude for the future, and content ourſelves with reflecting that our part is performed. He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wiſhes, and regret, in the laſt hour, his uſeleſs intentions, and barren zeal.

The moſt active promoters of the preſent ſchemes of Charity cannot be cleared from ſome inſtances of miſconduct, which may awaken contempt or cenſure, and haſten that neglect which is likely to come too ſoon of itſelf. The open competitions between different hoſpitals, and the animoſity with which their patrons oppoſe one another, may prejudice weak minds againſt them all. For it will not be eaſily believed, that any man can, for good reaſons, wiſh to exclude another from doing good. The ſpirit of Charity can only be continued by a reconciliation of theſe ridiculous feuds; and therefore, inſtead of contentions who ſhall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other ſtruggle than who ſhall be the firſt.

N° V. SATURDAY, MAY 17.

Κάλλος;
Ἀνθ' ἁγνέων ἀπάντων
Ἀνθ' ἁσπίδων ἁπασῶν. ANAC.

OUR military operations are at laſt begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Iſle of Wight; the heart of every Engliſhman now ſwells with confidence, though ſomewhat ſoftened by generous compaſſion for the conſternation and diſtreſſes of our enemies.

This formidable armament and ſplendid march produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundleſs diverſities of temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden conſiders her lover as already loſt, becauſe he cannot reach the camp but by croſſing the ſea; men, of a more political underſtanding, are perſuaded that we ſhall now ſee, in a few days, the ambaſſadors of France ſupplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, becauſe a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; ſome are compoſing ſongs of victory; ſome planning arches of triumph; and ſome are mixing fire-works for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extenſive and complicated objects different parts are ſelected by different eyes; and minds are variouſly affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the public is now fixed upon our ſoldiers, who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathleſs deſarts of the Iſle of Wight. The tender ſigh for their ſufferings, and the gay drink to their ſucceſs. I, who look, or believe myſelf to look, with more philoſophic eyes on human affairs, muſt confeſs, that I ſaw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other ſcenes, and the tear ſtole into my eyes, not for thoſe who were going away, but for thoſe who were left behind.

We have no reaſon to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themſelves. But how ſhall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a ſoldier, now amuſe their hours, and ſolace their ſeparation?

Of fifty thouſand men, now deſtined to different ſtations, if we allow each to have been occaſionally neceſſary only to four women, a ſhort computation will inform us, that two hundred thouſand ladies are left to languiſh in diſtreſs; two hundred thouſand ladies, who muſt run to ſales and auctions without an attendant; ſit at the play, without a critic to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; diſpoſe ſhells by their own invention; walk in the mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and ſhuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of theſe ladies, ſome, I hope, have lap-dogs, and ſome monkies; but they are unſatisfactory companions. Many uſeful offices are performed by men of ſcarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has adequate abilities. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a colonel; and if he has been much uſed to good company, is not wholly without converſation; but a parrot, after all, is a poor little creature, and has neither ſword nor ſhoulder-knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the ſoldiers muſt obey the call of their duty, and go to that ſide of the kingdom which faces France, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, ſhould not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long preſumed the ſword and ſpindle made for different hands, and denied the other ſex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be conſiſtently enough received in France, where the Salic Law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be ſovereigns, may ſurely ſuppoſe them capable to be ſoldiers.

It were to be wiſhed that ſome man, whoſe experience and authority might enforce regard, would propoſe that our encampments for the preſent year ſhould compriſe an equal number of men and women, who ſhould march and fight in mingled

mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would ſoon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impreſs.

Of theſe heroines, ſome might ſerve on foot, under the denomination of the Female Buffs; and ſome on horſeback, with the title of Lady Huſſars.

What objections can be made to this ſcheme I have endeavored maturely to conſider, and cannot find that a modern ſoldier has any duties, except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the hair has loſt it's powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat be ſpotted, a lady has a bruſh. Strength is of leſs importance ſince fire-arms have been uſed; blows of the hand are now ſeldom exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a ſprightly maiden?

Our maſculine ſquadrons will not ſuppoſe themſelves diſgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done ſomething which women could not have done. The troops of Braddock never ſaw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated by women. If our American general had headed an army of girls, he might ſtill have built a fort, and taken it. Had Minorca been defended by a female garriſon, it might have been ſurrendered, as it was, without a breach; and I cannot but think, that ſeven thouſand women might have ventured to look at Rochfort, ſack a village, rob a vineyard, and return in ſafety.

N° VI. SATURDAY, MAY 20.

Ταμεῖου ἀρείης γενναῖα γυνη. GR. PRO.

THE lady who had undertaken to ride on one horſe a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours, has compleated her journey in little more than two-thirds of the time ſtipulated, and was conducted through the laſt mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation ſhouted before her, and all the flowers of the Spring were ſcattered in her way.

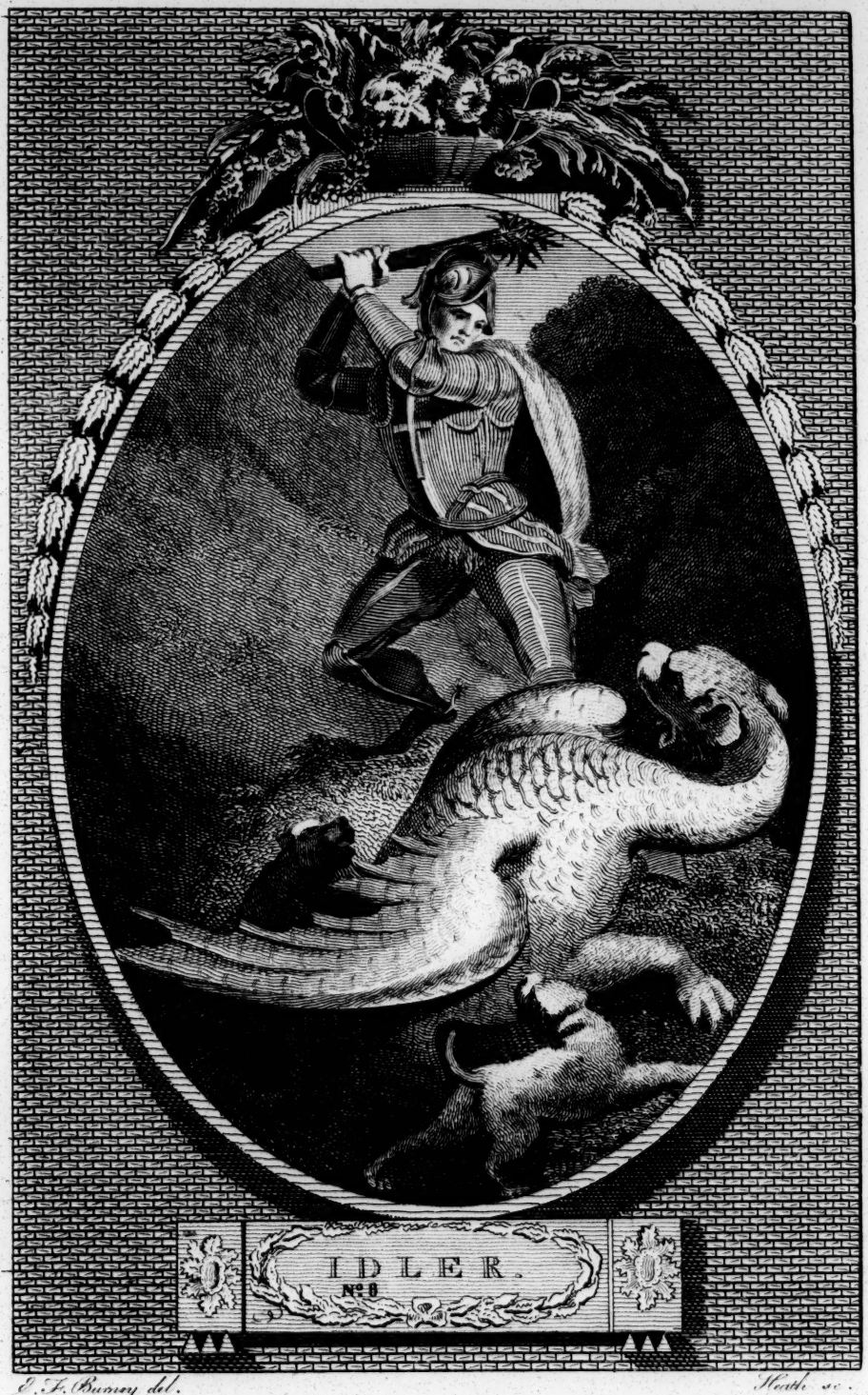
Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is diſtinguiſhed with public notice. I am far from wiſhing either to the Amazon or her horſe any diminution of happineſs, or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and ſuitably rewarded.

There was once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were conſidered as recompences equal to the moſt weariſome labours and terrific dangers, and when the miſeries of long marches and ſtormy ſeas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient time, ſhe might perhaps have been delighted with the ſimplicity of ancient gratitude? or if any thing was wanting to full ſatisfaction, ſhe might have ſupplied the deficiency with the hope of deification, and anticipated the altars that would be raiſed, and the vows that would be made by future candidates for equeſtrian glory, to the patroneſs of the race and the goddeſs of the ſtable.

But Fate reſerved her for a more enlightened age, which has diſcovered leaves and flowers to be tranſitory things; which conſiders profit as the end of honour; and relates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or loſt. In theſe days, to ſtrew the road with daiſies and lilies, is to mock merit and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer meaſure out his ſilks, for vegetable coin. A primroſe, though picked up under the feet of the moſt renowned courſer, will neither be received as a ſtake at cards, nor procure a ſeat at an opera, or buy candle for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuoſos, whoſe ſole ambition is to poſſeſs ſomething which can be found in no other hand, yet ſome are more accuſtomed to ſtore their cabinets by theft than purchaſe, and none of them would either ſteal or buy one of the flowers of gratulation till he knows that all the reſt are totally deſtroyed.

Little therefore did it avail this wonderful lady to be received, however joyfully, with ſuch obſolete and barren ceremonies of praiſe. Had the way been covered with guineas, though but for the tenth part of the laſt mile ſhe would have



F. F. Burney del. *Heath sc.*

Plate IV. Published as the Act directs by John Walker April 14. 1787.

have conſidered her ſkill and diligence as not wholly loſt; and might have rejoiced in the ſpeed and perſeverance which had left her ſuch ſuperfluity of time, that ſhe could at leiſure gather her reward without the danger of Atalanta's miſcarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been paved with gold but at a large expence; and we are at preſent engaged in war, which demands and enforces frugality. But common rules are made only for common life, and ſome deviation from general policy may be allowed in favour of a lady, that rode a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours.

Since the ſpirit of antiquity ſo much prevails amongſt us, that even on this great occaſion we have given flowers inſtead of money, let us at leaſt complete our imitation of the ancients, and endeavour to tranſmit to poſterity the memory of that virtue, which we conſider as ſuperior to pecuniary recompence. Let an equeſtrian ſtatue of this heroine be erected, near the ſtarting-poſt on the heath of Newmarket, to fill kindred ſouls with emulation, and tell the grand-daughters of our grand-daughters what an Engliſh maiden has once performed.

As events, however illuſtrious, are ſoon obſcured if they are intruſted to tradition, I think it neceſſary, that the pedeſtal ſhould be inſcribed with a conciſe account of this great performance. The compoſition of this narrative ought not to be committed raſhly to improper hands. If the rhetoricians of Newmarket, who may be ſuppoſed likely to conceive in it's full ſtrength the dignity of the ſubject, ſhould undertake to expreſs it, there is danger leſt they admit ſome phraſes which, though well underſtood at preſent, may be ambiguous in another century. If poſterity ſhould read on a public monument, that *the lady carried her horſe a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours*, they may think that the ſtatue and inſcription are at variance, becauſe one will repreſent the horſe as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horſe.

Some doubts likewiſe may be raiſed by ſpeculatiſts, and ſome controverſies be agitated among hiſtorians, concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known, that this wonder was performed in a time of war, ſome will ſuppoſe that the lady was frighted by invaders, and fled to preſerve her life or her chaſtity: others will conjecture, that ſhe was thus honoured for ſome intelligence carried of the enemy's deſigns: ſome will think that ſhe brought news of a victory; others, that ſhe was commiſſioned to tell of a conſpiracy; and ſome will congratulate themſelves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all theſe notions of patriotiſm and public ſpirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that ſhe only ran away from her guardians, and that the true cauſes of her ſpeed were fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance *ſhe won her wager*; and, leſt this ſhould, by any change of manners ſeem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had loſt their influence; that the love of praiſe was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wiſh of an Engliſhman was, *to win his wager*.

N° VII. SATURDAY, MAY 27.

ONE of the principal amuſements of the Idler is to read the works of thoſe minute hiſtorians the writers of news, who, though contemptuouſly overlooked by the compoſers of bulky volumes, are yet neceſſary in a nation where much wealth produces much leiſure, and one part of the people has nothing to do but to obſerve the lives and fortunes of the others.

To us, who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are ſupplied from day to day with materials for converſation, it is difficult to conceive how man can ſubſiſt without a news-paper, or to what entertainment companies can aſſemble, in thoſe wide regions of the earth that have neither Chronicles nor Magazines, neither Gazettes nor Advertiſers, neither Journals nor Evening Poſts.

There are never great numbers in any nation, whoſe reaſon or invention can find employment for their tongues, who can raiſe a pleaſing diſcourſe from their own ſtock of ſentiments and images; and

F. L. Bunny del. Heath sc.

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and thoſe few who have qualified themſelves by ſpeculation for general diſquiſitions, are ſoon left without an audience. The common talk of men muſt relate to facts in which the talkers have, or think they have, an intereſt; and where ſuch facts cannot be known, the pleaſures of ſociety will be merely ſenſual. Thus the natives of the Mahometan empires, who approach moſt nearly to European civility, have no higher pleaſure at their convivial aſſemblies than to hear a piper, or gaze upon a tumbler, and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by ſounds or ſhows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of England is greater than that of any other vulgar. This ſuperiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence, which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This univerſal diffuſion of inſtruction is, perhaps, not wholly without it's inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with ſuperficial diſputants; enables thoſe to talk who were born to work; and affords information ſufficient to elate vanity and ſtiffen obſtinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into compleat ſkill for full comprehenſion.

Whatever is found to gratify the public, will be multiplied by the emulation of venders beyond neceſſity or uſe. This plenty indeed produces cheapneſs, but cheapneſs always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of news-papers is often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the taſk of delighting or inſtructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without induſtry to gather, or diſcernment to ſelect.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increaſe of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. Theſe repetitions, indeed, waſte time, but they do not ſhorten it. The moſt eager peruſer of news is tired before he has compleated his labour, and many a man who enters the coffee-houſe in his night-gown and ſlippers, is called away to his ſhop, or his dinner, before he has well conſidered the ſtate of Europe.

It is diſcovered by Reaumur, that ſpiders might make ſilk, if they could be perſuaded to live in peace together. The writers of news, if they could be confederated, might give more pleaſure to the public. The morning and evening authors might divide an event between them; a ſingle action, and that not of much importance, might be gradually diſcovered, ſo as to vary a whole week with joy, anxiety, and conjecture.

We know that a French ſhip of war was lately taken by a ſhip of England; but this event was ſuffered to burſt upon us all at once, and then what we knew already was echoed from day to day, and from week to week.

Let us ſuppoſe theſe ſpiders of literature to ſpin together, and enquire to what an extenſive web ſuch another event might be regularly drawn, and how ſix morning and ſix evening writers might agree to retail their articles.

On *Monday Morning* the captain of a ſhip might arrive, who left the Friſeur of France, and the Bulldog, Captain Grim, in ſight of one another, ſo that an engagement ſeemed unavoidable.

Monday Evening. A ſound of cannon was heard off Cape Finiſterre, ſuppoſed to be thoſe of the Bulldog and Friſeur.

Tueſday Morning. It was this morning reported that the Bulldog engaged the Friſeur, yard-arm and yard-arm, three glaſſes and a half, but was obliged to ſheer off for want of powder. It is hoped that enquiry will be made into this affair in a proper place.

Tueſday Evening. The account of the engagement between the Bulldog and Friſeur was premature.

Wedneſday Morning. Another expreſs is arrived, which brings news, that the Friſeur had loſt all her maſts, and three hundred of her men, in the late engagement; and that Captain Grim is come into harbour much ſhattered.

Wedneſday Evening. We hear that the brave Captain Grim, having expended his powder, propoſed to enter the Friſeur ſword in hand; but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certain nobleman, remonſtrated againſt it.

Thurſday Morning. We wait impatiently for a full account of the late engagement between the Bulldog and Friſeur.

Thurſday Evening. It is ſaid that the Order of the Bath will be ſent to Captain Grim.

Friday Morning. A certain lord of the

the Admiralty has been heard to ſay of a certain captain, that if he had done his duty, a certain French ſhip might have been taken. It was not thus that merit was rewarded in the days of Cromwell.

Friday Evening. There is certain information at the Admiralty, that the Friſeur is taken, after a reſiſtance of about two hours.

Saturday Morning. A letter from one of the gunners of the Bulldog mentions the taking of the Friſeur, and attributes their ſucceſs wholly to the bravery and reſolution of Captain Grim, who never owed any of his advancement to borough-jobbers, or any other corrupters of the people.

Saturday Evening. Captain Grim arrived at the Admiralty, with an account that he engaged the Friſeur, a ſhip of equal force with his own, off Cape Finiſterre, and took her after an obſtinate reſiſtance, having killed one hundred and fifty of the French, with the loſs of ninety-five of his own men.

N° VIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 3.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

IN time of publick danger, it is every man's duty to withdraw his thoughts in ſome meaſure from his private intereſt, and employ part of his time for the general welfare. National conduct ought to be the reſult of national wiſdom, a plan formed by mature conſideration and diligent ſelection out of all the ſchemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man ſhould fight as if he was the ſingle champion; in preparations for war, every man ſhould think, as if the laſt event depended on his counſel. None can tell what diſcoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the public ſafety.

Full of theſe conſiderations, I have carefully reviewed the proceſs of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not ſee; and at another, have avoided the ſight of enemies, leſt we ſhould be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in diſcipline or in courage, is not very uſeful to inquire: they evidently want ſomething neceſſary to ſucceſs: and he that ſhall ſupply that want will deſerve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has alway been accounted politic and honourable, and therefore I hope it will raiſe no prejudices againſt my project, to confeſs that I borrowed it from a Frenchman.

When the Iſle of Rhodes was many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order now called the Knights of Malta, it was ravaged by a Dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he iſſued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beaſts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his deſtruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable ſcales, none would venture to attack him. At laſt Dudon, a French knight, undertook the deliverance of the iſland. From ſome place of ſecurity he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern ſoldier would ſay, *reconnoitered* him, and obſerved that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements*; and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of paſteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accuſtomed two ſturdy maſtiffs to feed themſelves, by tearing their way to the concealed fleſh. When his dogs were well practiſed in this method of plunder, he marched out with them at his heels, and ſhewed them the dragon; they ruſhed upon him in queſt of their dinner; Dudon battered his ſcull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his ſting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practiſed in our preſent ſtate. Let a fortification be raiſed on Saliſbury Plain, reſembling Breſt, or Toulon, or Paris itſelf, with all the uſual preparations for defence: let the incloſure be filled with beef and ale: let the ſoldiers from ſome proper eminence, ſee ſhirts waving upon lines

and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in her hands. When they are ſufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that ſide whence the wind blows, till they came within the ſcent of roaſt meat and tobacco. Contrive that they may approach the place faſting about an hour after dinner-time, aſſure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or ſpeaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by ſtorm; but if a panic ſhould ſeize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprize to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the ſame place be ſhewn them again, but with ſome additions of ſtrength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they ſhall train their men to fortitude. They beſt know what the ſoldiers and what themſelves can bear. It will be proper that the war ſhould every day vary it's appearance. Sometimes as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accuſtom them to a ſudden blaze; and ſometimes, by the clatter of empty pots, they may be inured to formidable noiſes. But let it never be forgotten, that victory muſt repoſe with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our French priſoners from the coaſt, and place them upon the walls in martial order. At their firſt appearance their hands muſt be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. In a month they may guard the place with their hands looſed, provided that on pain of death they be forbidden to ſtrike.

By this method our army will ſoon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately obſerved, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes, and the Indian war-cry is repreſented as too dreadful to be endured; as a ſound that will force the braveſt veteran to drop his weapon, and deſert his rank; that will deafen his ear, and chill his breaſt; that will neither ſuffer him to hear orders or to feel ſhame, or retain any ſenſibility but the dread of death.

That the ſavage clamours of naked barbarians ſhould thus terrify troops diſciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is ſurely ſtrange. But this is no time to reaſon. I am of opinion, that by a proper mixture of aſſes, bulls, turkeys, geeſe, and tragedians, a noiſe might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme danger, by a ſudden concert of terrific vociferation. When they have endured this laſt trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the Gauls, and the howl of the Americans.

N° IX. SATURDAY, JUNE 10.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Have read you; that is a favour few authors can boaſt of having received from me beſides yourſelf. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleaſed and angered me. Never did writer appear ſo delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the Idler. But what a falling-off was there when your firſt production was brought to light! A natural irreſiſtible attachment to that favourable paſſion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the Idler, but I find him a ſtranger to the title.

What rules has he propoſed totally to unbrace the ſlackened nerve; to ſhade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the ſmooth feature and the uncontracted muſcles; or procure inſenſibility to the whole animal compoſition.

Theſe were ſome of the placid bleſſings I promiſed myſelf the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myſelf, by muſtering up all my ſtrength to ſet about reading you; but I am diſappointed in them all; and the ſtroke of eleven in the morning is ſtill as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my cloaths ſtill as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedneſs which the thrice

happy

happy Indians to this day enjoy! How many unſolicitous hours ſhould I baſk away, warmed in bed by the ſun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when neceſſity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs.

But wherefore do I talk to you upon ſubjects of this delicate nature; you who ſeem ignorant of the inexpreſſible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a ſoft ſtool for the elevation of the feet. Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happineſs as you pleaſe; I embrace that opinion which makes it conſiſt in the abſence of pain. To reflect is pain; to ſtir is pain; therefore I never reflect or ſtir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my ſcheme of life Indolence, and therefore think the Idler excuſed from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon Indolence and Idleneſs as the ſame; and ſo deſire you will now and then, while you profeſs yourſelf of our fraternity, take ſome notice of me, and others in my ſituation, who think they have a right to your aſſiſtance; or relinquiſh the name.

You may publiſh, burn or deſtroy this, juſt as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it, before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him without getting out of my chair; that is a ſufficient reaſon for my not affixing any. And being obliged to ſit upright to ring the bell for my ſervant to convey this to the penny-poſt, if I ſlip the opportunity of his being now in the room, makes me break off abruptly.

This correſpondent, whoever he be, is not to be diſmiſſed without ſome tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine Idler, than uneaſineſs without moleſtation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of half a paper ſhall not wholly overpower my ſincerity. I muſt inform you, that, with all his pretenſions, he that calls for directions to be idle, is yet but in the rudiments of Idleneſs, and has attained neither the practice nor theory of waſting life. The true nature of Idleneſs he will know in time, by continuing to be idle. Virgil tells us of an impetuous and rapid being, that acquires ſtrength by motion. The Idler acquires weight by lying ſtill.

The *vis inertiæ*, the quality of reſiſting all external impulſe, is hourly increaſing; the reſtleſs and troubleſome faculties of attention and diſtinction, reflection on the paſt, and ſolicitude for the future, by a long indulgence of Idleneſs, will, like tapers in unelaſtic air, be gradually extinguiſhed; and the officious lover, the vigilant ſoldier, the buſy trader, may, by a judicious compoſure of his mind, ſink into a ſtate approaching to that of brute matter; in which he ſhall retain the conſciouſneſs of his own exiſtence, only by an obtuſe languor, and drowſy diſcontent.

This is the loweſt ſtage to which the favourites of Idleneſs can deſcend; theſe regions of undelighted quiet can be entered by few. Of thoſe that are preparing to ſink down into their ſhade, ſome are rouſed into action by Avarice or Ambition, ſome are awakened by the voice of Fame, ſome allured by the ſmile of Beauty, and many with-held by the importunities of Want. Of all the enemies of Idleneſs, Want is the moſt formidable. Fame is ſoon found to be a ſound, and Love a dream; Avarice and Ambition may be juſtly ſuſpected of privy confederacies with Idleneſs; for when they have for a while protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives under her dominion. Want always ſtruggles againſt Idleneſs, but Want herſelf is often overcome; and every hour ſhews the careful obſerver, thoſe who had rather live in eaſe than in plenty.

So wide is the reign of Idleneſs, and ſo powerful her influence. But ſhe does not immediately confer all her gifts. My correſpondent, who ſeems, with all his errors, worthy of advice, muſt be told, that he is calling too haſtily for the laſt effuſion of total inſenſibility. Whatever he may have been taught by unſkilful Idlers to believe, labour is neceſſary in this initiation to Idleneſs. He that never labours may know the pains of Idleneſs, but not the pleaſure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himſelf to inſenſibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of Idleneſs, and ſhorten thoſe of labour, till at laſt he will lie down to reſt, and no longer diſturb the world or himſelf by buſtle or competition.

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want; for a true Idler often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and aſks queſtions which he does not deſire ever to be anſwered.

N° X. SATURDAY, JUNE 17.

CREDULITY, or Confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakneſs imputed by every ſect and party to all others, and indeed by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of Credulity, the moſt obſtinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who, being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a ſtate, reſign the uſe of their own eyes and ears, and reſolve to believe nothing that does not favour thoſe whom they profeſs to follow.

The bigot of philoſophy is ſeduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is entangled in ſyſtems by which truth and falſehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on ſubjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Carteſian, who denies that his horſe feels the ſpur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the diſciple of Malbranche, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which, according to vulgar apprehenſion, ſwept away his legs; the follower of Berkeley, who, while he ſits writing at his table, declares that he has neither table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at leaſt of being deceived by fallacies not eaſily detected, and may plead that they did not forſake truth, but for appearances which they were not able to diſtinguiſh from it.

But the man who engages in a party has ſeldom to do with any thing remote or abſtruſe. The preſent ſtate of things is before his eyes; and, if he cannot be ſatisfied without retroſpection, yet he ſeldom extends his views beyond the hiſtorical events of the laſt century. All the knowledge that he can want is within his attainment, and moſt of the arguments which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet ſo it is that an Idler meets every hour of his life with men who have different opinions upon every thing paſt, preſent, and future; why deny the moſt notorious facts, contradict the moſt cogent truths, and perſiſt in aſſerting today what they aſſerted yeſterday, in defiance of evidence, and contempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown old in idleneſs, are Tom Tempeſt and Jack Sneaker. Both of them conſider themſelves as neglected by their parties, and therefore entitled to credit, for why ſhould they favour ingratitude? They are both men of integrity, where no factious intereſt is to be promoted; and both lovers of truth, when they are not heated with political debate.

Tom Tempeſt is a ſteady friend to the houſe of Stuart. He can recount the prodigies that have appeared in the ſky, and the calamities that have afflicted the nation every year from the Revolution; and is of opinion, that if the exiled family had continued to reign, there would have neither been worms in our ſhips, nor caterpillars on our trees. He wonders that the nation was not awakened by the hard froſt to a revocation of the true king, and is hourly afraid that the whole iſland will be loſt in the ſea. He believes that King William burned Whitehall, that he might ſteal the furniture, and that Tillotſon died an atheiſt. Of Queen Anne he ſpeaks with more tenderneſs, owns that ſhe meant well, and can tell by whom and why ſhe was poiſoned. In the ſucceeding reigns all has been corruption, malice, and deſign. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for theſe forty years by chance or error; he holds that the battle of Dettingen was won by miſtake, and that of Fontenoy loſt by contract; that the Victory was ſunk by a private order; that Cornhill was fired by emiſſaries from the council; and the arch of Weſtminſter Bridge was ſo contrived as to ſink, on purpoſe that the nation might be put to charge. He conſiders the new road to Iſlington as an encroachment on liberty, and often aſſerts that *broad wheels* will be the ruin of England.

Tom is generally vehement and noiſy, but

but nevertheleſs has ſome ſecrets, which he always communicates in a whiſper. Many and many a time has Tom told me, in a corner, that our miſeries were almoſt at an end, and that we ſhould ſee, in a month, another monarch on the throne; the time elapſes without a revolution; Tom meets me again with new intelligence; the whole ſcheme is now ſettled, and we ſhall ſee great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the preſent eſtabliſhment; he has known thoſe who ſaw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enſlaved by the Iriſh. He believes that King William never loſt a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer, he would have conquered France. He holds that Charles the Firſt was a Papiſt. He allows there were ſome good men in the reign of Queen Anne; but the peace of Utrecht brought a blaſt upon the nation, and has been the cauſe of all the evil that we have ſuffered to the preſent hour. He believes that the ſcheme of the South Sea was well intended, but that it miſcarried by the influence of France. He conſiders a ſtanding army as the bulwark of liberty, thinks us ſecured from corruption by ſeptennial parliaments, relates how we are enriched and ſtrengthened by the Electoral dominions, and declares that the public debt is a bleſſing to the nation.

Yet, amidſt all this proſperity, poor Jack is hourly diſturbed by the dread of Popery. He wonders that ſome ſtricter laws are not made againſt Papiſts, and is ſometimes afraid that they are buſy with French gold among the biſhops and judges.

He cannot believe that the non-jurors are ſo quiet for nothing, they muſt certainly be forming ſome plot for the eſtabliſhment of Popery; he does not think the preſent oaths ſufficiently binding, and wiſhes that ſome better ſecurity could be found for the ſucceſſion of Hanover. He is zealous for the naturalization of foreign Proteſtants, and rejoiced at the admiſſion of the Jews to the Engliſh privileges, becauſe he thought a Jew would never be a Papiſt.

N° XI. SATURDAY, JUNE 24.

IT is commonly obſerved, that when two Engliſhmen meet, their firſt talk is of the weather; they are in haſte to tell each other, what each muſt already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of ſubtilties and paradoxes, ſome who derive the civil inſtitutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and ſlavery to the temperature of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From theſe dreams of idle ſpeculation, a ſlight ſurvey of life, and a little knowledge of hiſtory is ſufficient to awaken any enquirer, whoſe ambition of diſtinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are ſeldom the reſult of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular aſſemblies, or in conquered countries by deſpotic authority. Laws are often occaſional, often capricious, made always by a few, and ſometimes by a ſingle voice. Nations have changed their characters; ſlavery is now no where more patiently endured than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national cuſtoms can ariſe only from general agreement; they are not impoſed, but choſen and are continued only by the continuance of their cauſe. An Engliſhman's notice of the weather is the natural conſequence of changeable ſkies and uncertain ſeaſons. In many parts of the world, wet weather and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our iſland every man goes to ſleep, unable to gueſs whether he ſhall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmoſphere, whether his reſt ſhall be lulled by a ſhower, or broken by a tempeſt. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an eſcape from ſomething that we feared, and mutually complain of bad, as of the loſs of ſomething that we hoped.

Such is the reaſon of our practice; and who ſhall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court, whoſe buſineſs

ſineſs is to watch the looks of a being weak and fooliſh as himſelf, and whoſe vanity is to recount the names of men, who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacuity: not the proprietor of funds, who ſtops his acquaintance in the ſtreet to tell him of the loſs of half-a-crown; not the enquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events, and talks of ſkirmiſhes and ſieges, of which no conſequence will ever reach his hearers or himſelf. The weather is a nobler and more intereſting ſubject; it is the preſent ſtate of the ſkies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are ſuſpended, on which millions depend for the neceſſaries of life.

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reaſon, leſs honourable to my dear countrymen. Our diſpoſitions too frequently change with the colour of the ſky; and when we find ourſelves chearful and good natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgments to the powers of ſun-ſhine; or if we ſink into dullneſs and peeviſhneſs, look round the horiſon for an excuſe, and charge our diſcontent upon an eaſterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reaſon, than to reſign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependance on the weather and the wind, for the only bleſſings which Nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the ſky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the ſun for peace and gaiety, or deprecate the clouds leſt ſorrow ſhould overwhelm us, is the cowardice of Idleneſs, and the idolatry of Folly.

Yet, even in this age of enquiry and knowledge, when ſuperſtition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have loſt their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Thoſe that laugh at the portentous glare of a comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and ſituations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by vernal breezes, and the reaſon invigorated by a bright calm.

If men who have given up themſelves to fanciful credulity would confine their conceits in their own minds, they might regulate their lives by the barometer, with inconvenience only to themſelves; but to fill the world with accounts of intellects ſubject to ebb and flow, of one genius that awakened in the Spring, and another that ripened in the Autumn, of one mind expanded in the Summer, and of another concentrated in the Winter, is no leſs dangerous than to tell children of bugbears and goblins. Fear will find every houſe haunted, and Idleneſs will wait for ever for the moment of illumination.

This diſtinction of ſeaſons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that ſhall reſolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will ſoon make himſelf ſuperior to the ſeaſons, and may ſet at defiance the morning miſt, and the evening damp, the blaſts of the eaſt, and the clouds of the ſouth.

It was the boaſt of the Stoic philoſophy, to make man unſhaken by calamity, and unelated by ſucceſs, incorruptible by pleaſure, and invulnerable by pain; theſe are heights of wiſdom which none ever attained, and to which few can aſpire; but there are lower degrees of conſtancy neceſſary to common virtue; and every man, however he may diſtruſt himſelf in the extremes of good or evil, might at leaſt ſtruggle againſt the tyranny of the climate, and refuſe to enſlave his virtue or his reaſon to the moſt variable of all variations, the changes of the weather.

N° XII. SATURDAY, JULY 1.

THAT every man is important in his own eyes is a poſition of which we all either voluntarily or unwarily at leaſt once an hour confeſs the truth; and it will unavoidably follow, that every man believes himſelf important to the public.

The right which this importance gives us to general notice and viſible diſtinction, is one of thoſe diſputable privileges which we have not always courage to aſſert; and which we therefore ſuffer to lie dormant till ſome elation of mind, or viciſſitude of fortune, incites

incites us to declare our pretenſions and enforce our demands. And hopeleſs as the claim of vulgar characters may ſeem to the ſupercilious and ſevere, there are few who do not at one time or other endeavour to ſtep forward beyond their rank, who do not make ſome ſtruggles for fame, and ſhew that they think all other conveniences and delights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name, can happen but to few. A name, even in the moſt commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which muſt be deſerved before it will be granted, and is at laſt unwillingly beſtowed. But this unwillingneſs only encreaſes deſire in him who believes his merit ſufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life, in which this fondneſs for a name ſeems principally to predominate in both ſexes. Scarce any couple comes together, but the nuptials are declared in the newspapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curioſity in queſt of ſtateſmen and heroes, is ſtopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. Buckram, an eminent ſaleſman in Threadneedle Street, and Miſs Dolly Juniper, the only daughter of an eminent diſtiller, of the pariſh of St. Giles's in the Fields, a young lady adorned with every accompliſhment that can give happineſs to the married ſtate. Or we are told, amidſt our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. Winker, a tide-waiter at Yarmouth, was married to Mrs. Cackle, a widow lady of great accompliſhments, and that as ſoon as the ceremony was performed they ſet out in a poſt-chaiſe for Yarmouth.

Many are the enquiries which ſuch intelligence muſt undoubtedly raiſe, but nothing in this world is laſting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladneſs, the felicity of Mr. Buckram and Mr. Winker, and ranſacked his memory for the names of Juniper and Cackle, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that Mirza will not cover this ſeaſon; or that a ſpaniel has been loſt or ſtolen, that anſwers to the name of Ranger.

Whence it ariſes that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to diſcover. Some, perhaps, think it kind, by a public declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealouſy; to let parents know that they may ſet their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of the bridegroom; or to diſmiſs to their counters and their offices the amorous youths that had been uſed to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

Theſe connubial praiſes may have another cauſe. It may be the intention of the huſband and wife to digniſy themſelves in the eyes of each other; and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce reſpect.

It was ſaid of the family of Lucas, that it was *noble*, for *all the brothers were valiant, and all the ſiſters were virtuous*. What would a ſtranger ſay of the Engliſh nation, in which on the day of marriage all the men are *eminent*, and all the women *beautiful*, *accompliſhed*, and *rich*?

How long the wife will be perſuaded of the eminence of her huſband, or the huſband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reaſonably be queſtioned. I am afraid that much time ſeldom paſſes before each is convinced that praiſes are fallacious, and particularly thoſe praiſes which we confer upon ourſelves.

I ſhould therefore think, that this cuſtom might be omitted without any loſs to the community, and that the ſons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witneſſes of their worth or happineſs but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on the bridal day without ſome gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who propoſes to devote his powers to their ſervice.

Mr. Settle, a man whoſe *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whoſe *accompliſhments* were confeſſed by the *accompliſhed*, in the latter part of a long life ſupported himſelf by an uncommon expedient. He had a ſtanding Elegy and Epithalamium, of which only the firſt and laſt were leaves varied occaſionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character. When any marriage became known, Settle ran to the

the bridegroom with his Epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his Elegy.

Who can think himſelf diſgraced by a trade that was practiſed ſo long by the rival of Dryden, by the poet whoſe Empreſs of Morocco was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend purpoſes to open an office in the Fleet for matrimonial panegyrics, and will accommodate all with praiſe who think their own powers of expreſſion inadequate to their merit. He will ſell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is moſt faſhionable or moſt deſired; but deſires his cuſtomers to remember, that he ſets beauty at the higheſt price, and Riches at the next; and, if he be well paid, throws in Virtue for nothing.

N° XII. SATURDAY, JULY 8.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THOUGH few men of prudence are much inclined to interpoſe in diſputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expence of the arbitrator; yet I will venture to lay before you a controverſy, by which the quiet of my houſe has been long diſturbed, and which, unleſs you can decide it, is likely to produce laſting evils, and embitter thoſe hours which Nature ſeems to have appropriated to tenderneſs and repoſe.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domeſtic prudence, and elegant frugality. I lived with her at eaſe, if not with happineſs, and ſeldom had any reaſon of complaint. The houſe was always clean, the ſervants were active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the ſame minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their huſbands, leſt their own economy ſhould be leſs eſteemed.

During this gentle lapſe of life, my dear brought me three daughters. I wiſhed for a ſon to continue the family; but my wife often tells me the boys are dirty things, and are always troubleſome in a houſe, and declares that ſhe has hated the ſight of them ever ſince ſhe ſaw Lady Fondle's eldeſt ſon ride over a carpet with his hobby-horſe all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore compoſed myſelf to bear what I could not remedy, and reſolved to beſtow that care on my daughters, to which only the ſons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcileable enemy to Idleneſs, and conſiders every ſtate of life as Idleneſs, in which the hands are not employed, or ſome art acquired, by which ſhe thinks money may be got or ſaved.

In purſuance of this principle, ſhe calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a taſk of needle-work to be performed before breakfaſt. They are confined in a garret, which has it's window in the roof, both becauſe work is beſt done at a ſky-light, and becauſe children are apt to loſe time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfaſt, and as they deſerve are commended or reproved; they are then ſent up with a new taſk till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother ſits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and is ſometimes denied to her neareſt relations when ſhe is engaged in teaching them a new ſtitch.

By this continual exerciſe of their diligence, ſhe has obtained a very conſiderable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fireſkreens as chimneys, and three flouriſhed quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *futile pictures*, which imitate tapeſtry. But all their work is not ſet out to ſhew; ſhe has boxes filled with knit garters and braided ſhoes. She has twenty covers for ſide-ſaddles embroidered with ſilver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various figures, which ſhe reſolves ſome time or other to hang up. All theſe ſhe diſplays to her company whenever ſhe is elate with merit, and eager for praiſe; and amidſt the praiſes which her friends and herſelf beſtow upon

on her merit, ſhe never fails to turn to me, and aſk what all theſe would coſt, if I had been to buy them.

I ſometimes venture to tell her, that many of the ornaments are ſuperfluous; that what is done with ſo much labour might have been ſupplied by a very eaſy purchaſe; that the work is not always worth the materials; and that I know not why the children ſhould be perſecuted with uſeleſs taſks, or obliged to make ſhoes that are never worn. She anſwers, with a look of contempt, that men never care how money goes, and proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for which ſhe is contriving covers, and of a couch which ſhe intends to ſtand as a monument of needle-work.

In the mean time the girls grow up in total ignorance of every thing paſt, preſent, and future. Molly aſked me the other day, whether Ireland was in France, and was ordered by her mother to mend her hem. Kitty knows not, at ſixteen, the difference between a Proteſtant and a Papiſt, becauſe ſhe has been employed three years in filling the ſide of a cloſet with a hanging that is to repreſent Cranmer in the flames. And Dolly, my eldeſt girl, is now unable to read a chapter in the Bible, having ſpent all her time, which other children paſs at ſchool, in working the Interview between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

About a month ago, Tent and Turkey-ſtitch ſeemed at a ſtand; my wife knew not what new work to introduce: I ventured to propoſe that the girls ſhould now learn to read and write, and mentioned the neceſſity of a little arithmetic; but, unhappily, my wife has diſcovered that linen wears out, and has bought the girls three little wheels, that they may ſpin hukkaback for the ſervants table. I remonſtrated, that with larger wheels they might diſpatch in an hour what muſt now coſt them a day; but ſhe told me, with irreſiſtible authority, that any buſineſs is better than idleneſs; that when theſe wheels are ſet upon a table, with mats under them, they will turn without noiſe, and keep the girls upright; that great wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and that with theſe, ſmall as they are, ſhe does not doubt but that the three girls, if they are kept cloſe, will ſpin every year as much cloth as would coſt five pounds if one was to buy it.

N° XIV. SATURDAY, JULY 15.

WHEN Diogenes received a viſit in his tub from Alexander the Great, and was aſked, according to the ancient forms of royal courteſy, what petition he had to offer—'I have no-'thing,' ſaid he, 'to aſk, but that you 'would remove to the other ſide, that 'you may not, by intercepting the 'ſunſhine, take from me what you 'cannot give me.'

Such was the demand of Diogenes from the greateſt monarch of the earth; which thoſe, who have leſs power than Alexander, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themſelves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do ſometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence ſhould at leaſt be vigilantly preſerved.

It is well known, that time one paſt never returns; and that the moment which is loſt, is loſt for ever. Time therefore ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invaſion; and yet there is no man who does no claim the power of waſting that time which is the right of others.

This uſurpation is ſo general, that a very ſmall part of the year is ſpent by choice; ſcarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is deſired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one ſteals away an hour, and another a day; one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into buſineſs, another by lulling us with amuſement; the depredation is continued through a thouſand viciſſitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having loſt all, we can loſe no more.

This waſte of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the great, whoſe followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at laſt with petitions in their hands. Thoſe who raiſe envy, will eaſily incur cenſure. I know not whether ſtatesmen and patrons do not ſuffer more reproaches than they deſerve, and may not rather them-

ſelves complain that they are given up a prey to pretenſions without merit, and to importunity without ſhame.

The truth is, that the inconveniencies of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number ſolicitation is it's own reward. To be ſeen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freſheſt news, to gratify an inferior circle with predictions of increaſe or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compenſations more than equivalent to the delay of favours, which perhaps he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man conſpicuous in a high ſtation, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependants, may be conſidered as a beaſt of prey, juſtly dreaded, but eaſily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured, need not approach it. The great danger of the waſte of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not reſiſted, becauſe they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded miſchiefs, and inviſible encroachments.

He whoſe rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, muſt give up himſelf, in a great meaſure, to the convenience or humour of thoſe who ſurround him. Every man, who is ſick of himſelf, will fly to him for relief; he that wants to ſpeak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to ſpeak. Hour paſſes after hour, the noon ſucceeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thouſand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as faſt as they are offered, but which the cuſtom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindneſs of others, we muſt endure their follies. He, who cannot perſuade himſelf to withdraw from ſociety, muſt be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the conſulter, who aſks advice which he never takes; to the boaſter, who bluſters only to be praiſed; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whoſe happineſs is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himſelf know to be vain; to the œconomiſt, who tells of bargains and ſettlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the uſurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only becauſe he loves to be talking.

To put every man in poſſeſſion of his own time, and reſcue the day from this ſucceſſion of uſurpers, is beyond my power and beyond my hope. Yet, perhaps, ſome ſtop might be put to this unmerciful perſecution, if all would ſeriouſly reflect, that whoever pays a viſit that is not deſired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

N° XV. SATURDAY, JULY 22.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Have the misfortune to be a man of buſineſs; that, you will ſay, is a moſt grievous one: but what makes it the more ſo to me, is, that my wife has nothing to do; at leaſt ſhe had too good an education, and the proſpect of too good a fortune in reverſion when I married her, to think of employing herſelf either in my ſhop affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, muſt be filled up ſome way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind, in weighing my goods out, and waiting on my cuſtomers: but my wife, though ſhe could be of as much uſe as a ſhopman to me, if ſhe would put her hand to it, is now only in my way. She walks all the morning ſauntering about the ſhop with her arms through her pocket-holes, or ſtands gaping at the door-ſill, and looking at every perſon that paſſes by. She is continually aſking me a thouſand frivolous queſtions about every cuſtomer that comes in and goes out; and all the while that I am entering any thing in my day-book, ſhe is lolling over the counter, and ſtaring at it, as if I was only ſcribbling or drawing figures for her amuſement. Sometimes

times, indeed, ſhe will take a needle: but as ſhe always works at the door, or in the middle of the ſhop, ſhe has ſo many interruptions, that ſhe is longer hemming a towel, or darning a ſtocking, than I am in breaking forty loaves of ſugar, and making it up into pounds.

In the afternoon I am ſure likewiſe to have her company, except ſhe is called upon by ſome of her acquaintance: and then, as we let out all the upper part of our houſe, and have only a little room backwards for ourſelves, they either keep ſuch a chattering, or elſe are calling out every moment to me, that I cannot mind my buſineſs for them.

My wife, I am ſure, might do all the little matters our family requires; and I could wiſh that ſhe would employ herſelf in them; but, inſtead of that, we have a girl to do the work, and look after a little boy about two years old, which I may fairly ſay is the mother's own child. The brat muſt be humoured in every thing: he is therefore ſuffered conſtantly to play in the ſhop, pull all the goods about, and clamber up the ſhelves to get at the plumbs and ſugar. I dare not correct him; becauſe if I did, I ſhould have wife and maid both upon me at once. As to the latter, ſhe is as lazy and ſluttiſh as her miſtreſs; and becauſe ſhe complains ſhe has too much work, we can ſcarce get her to do any thing at all: nay, what is worſe than that, I am afraid ſhe is hardly honeſt; and as ſhe is entruſted to buy in all our proviſions, the jade, I am ſure, makes a market-penny out of every article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenings are the only time, when it is fine weather, that I am left to myſelf; for then ſhe generally takes the child out to give it milk in the Park. When ſhe comes home again, ſhe is ſo fatigued with walking, that ſhe cannot ſtir from her chair: and it is an hour, after ſhop is ſhut, before I can get a bit of ſupper, while the maid is taken up in undreſſing and putting the child to bed.

But you will pity me much more, when I tell you the manner in which we generally paſs our Sundays. In the morning ſhe is commonly too ill to dreſs herſelf to go to church, ſhe therefore never gets up till noon; and, what is ſtill more vexatious, keeps *me* in bed with her, when I ought to be buſily engaged in better employment. It is well if ſhe can get her things on by dinner time; and when that is over, I am ſure to be dragged out by her either to Georgia, or Hornſey Wood, or the White Conduit Houſe. Yet even theſe near excurſions are ſo very fatiguing to her, that, beſides what it coſts me in tea and hot rolls, and ſyllabubs, and cakes for the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hackney-coach, or drive them out in a one-horſe chair. At other times, as my wife is rather of the fatteſt, and a very poor walker, beſides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myſelf.

Thus, Sir, does ſhe conſtantly drawl out her time, without either profit or ſatisfaction; and, while I ſee my neighbours wives helping in the ſhop, and almoſt earning as much as their huſbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In ſhort, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradeſman, as I am, than to be joined to ſuch a woman, who is rather a clog than an helpmate to him.

I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

N° XVI. SATURDAY, JULY 29.

I Paid a viſit yeſterday to my old friend Ned Drugget, at his country lodgings. Ned began trade with a very ſmall fortune; he took a ſmall houſe in an obſcure ſtreet, and for ſome years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purſe*, he was content with moderate profit; having obſerved or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter edge at the entrance and departure of every cuſtomer, liſtened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refuſed without reſentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was to ſtand at his own door and look into the ſtreet. His dinner was ſent him from a neighbouring alehouſe, and he opened and ſhut the ſhop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation ſoon extended from one end of the ſtreet to the other; and

Mr. Drugger's exemplary conduct was recommended by every master to his apprentice, and by every father to his son. Ned was not only considered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeness, for he was remarkably neat in his dress; and would wear his coat thread-bare without spotting it; his hat was always brushed, his shoes glossy, his wig nicely curled, and his stockings without a wrinkle. With such qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miss Comfit, the only daughter of Mr. Comfit the confectioner.

Ned is one of those whose happiness marriage has encreased. His wife had the same disposition with himself, and his method of life was very little changed, except that he dismissed the lodgers from the first floor, and took the whole house into his own hands.

He had already, by his parsimony, accumulated a considerable sum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to grasp at greater acquisitions; and was always ready, with money in his hand, to pick up the refuse of a sale, or to buy the stock of a trader who retired from business. He soon added his parlour to his shop, and was obliged, a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouse.

He had now a shop splendidly and copiously furnished with every thing that time had injured, or fashion had degraded, with fragments of tissues, odd yards of brocade, vast bales of faded silk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbands. His shop was soon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequented by every form of ostentatious poverty. Every maid, whose misfortune it was to be taller than her lady, matched her gown at Mr. Drugget's; and many a maiden who had passed a winter with her aunt in London, dazzled the rustics at her return, with cheap finery which Drugget had supplied. His shop was often visited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next street, and crept through the alley in linen gowns. Drugget knows the rank of his customers by their bashfulness? and when he finds them unwilling to be seen, invites them up stairs, or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced at the increasing prosperity of my friend, and imagined that as he grew rich, he was growing happy. His mind has partaken the enlargement of his fortune. When I stepped in for the first five years, I was welcomed only with a shake of the hand; in the next period of his life, he beckoned across the way for a pot of beer; but, for six years past, he invites me to dinner; and, if he bespeaks me the day before, never fails to regale me with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither made him uncivil nor negligent: he rose at the same hour, attended with the same assiduity, and bowed with the same gentleness. But for some years he has been much inclined to talk of the fatigues of business, and the confinement of a shop, and to wish that he had been so happy as to have renewed his uncle's lease of a farm, that he might have lived without noise and hurry, in a pure air, in the artless society of honest villagers, and the contemplation of the works of nature.

I soon discovered the cause of my friend's philosophy. He thought himself grown rich enough to have a lodging in the country, like the mercers on Ludgate Hill, and was resolved to enjoy himself in the decline of life. This was a revolution not to be made suddenly. He talked three years of the pleasures of the country, but passed every night over his own shop. But at last he resolved to be happy, and hired a lodging in the country, that he may steal some hours in the week from business; 'For,' says he, '*when a man advances* '*in life, he loves to entertain himself some-* '*times with his own thoughts.*'

I was invited to this seat of quiet and contemplation among those whom Mr. Drugget considers as his most reputable friends, and desires to make the first witnesses of his elevation to the highest dignities of a shop-keeper. I found him at Islington, in a room which overlooked the high road, amusing himself with looking through the window, which the clouds of dust would not suffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and asked me, if I did not feel myself refreshed. He then desired that dinner might be hastened, for fresh air always sharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toast and a glass of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleasure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him so long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr.

Drugget

Drugget again repeated the praiſes of the country, recommended the pleaſures of meditation, and told them, that he had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they paſſed before him.

N° XVII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 5.

THE rainy weather which has continued the laſt month, is ſaid to have given great diſturbance to the inſpectors of barometers. The oraculous glaſſes have deceived their votaries; ſhower has ſucceeded ſhower, though they predicted ſunſhine and dry ſkies; and by fatal confidence in theſe fallacious promiſes, many coats have loſt their gloſs, and many curls been moiſtened to flaccidity.

This is one of the diſtreſſes to which mortals ſubject themſelves by the pride of ſpeculation. I had no part in this learned diſappointment, who am content to credit my ſenſes, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the ſun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preſerve me from a ſhower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine Idler; but to be wet in oppoſition to theory, can befal only the Idler that pretends to be buſy. Of thoſe that ſpin out life in trifles, and die without a memorial, many flatter themſelves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding ſome improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches; and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmoſt care, to hide his poverty from others, and his *idleneſs* from himſelf.

Among thoſe whom I never could perſuade to rank themſelves with Idlers, and who ſpeak with indignation of my morning ſleeps and nocturnal rambles; one paſſes the day in catching ſpiders, that he may count their eyes with a microſcope; another erects his head, and exhibits the duſt of a marigold ſeparated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of Leeuwenhoeck himſelf. Some turn the wheel of electricity, ſome ſuſpend rings to a loadſtone, and find that what they did yeſterday they can do again today. Some regiſter the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourleſs liquors may produce a colour by union; and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled: they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, ſay it is ſtrange, and mingle them again.

The Idlers that ſport only with inanimate nature may claim ſome indulgence; if they are uſeleſs, they are ſtill innocent: but there are others whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior profeſſors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whoſe lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whoſe favourite amuſement is to nail dogs to tables, and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the exciſion or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the more laſting agonies are produced by poiſon forced into the mouth or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the ſenſibility of the tender mind with images like theſe. If ſuch cruelties were not practiſed, it were to be deſired that they ſhould not be conceived; but ſince they are publiſhed every day with oſtentation, let me be allowed once to mention them, ſince I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has inviduouſly remarked of Woodward, that he gathered ſhells and ſtones, and would paſs for a philoſopher. With pretenſions much leſs reaſonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and ſtyles himſelf Phyſician, prepares himſelf by familiar cruelty for that profeſſion which he is to exerciſe upon the tender and the helpleſs, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture, and continue thoſe experiments upon infancy and age which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs.

What is alledged in defence of theſe hateful practiſes, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poiſon, knowledge is not always ſought, and is very ſeldom attained. The experiments

riments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yeſterday, will be willing to amuſe himſelf with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that by living diſſections any diſcovery has been made by which a ſingle malady is more eaſily cured. And if the knowledge of phyſiology has been ſomewhat increaſed, he ſurely buys knowledge dear, who learns the uſe of the lacteals at the expence of his humanity. It is time that univerſal reſentment ſhould ariſe againſt theſe horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguiſh thoſe ſenſations which give man confidence in man, and make the phyſician more dreadful than the gout or ſtone.

N° XVIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 12.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

IT commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain diſtinction by ridicule or cenſure, that he teaches others to practiſe his own arts againſt himſelf; and that, after a ſhort enjoyment of the applauſe paid to his ſagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to ſuffer the ſame ſeverities of ſcrutiny, to hear enquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration ſporting with his failings.

The natural diſcontent of inferiority will ſeldom fail to operate in ſome degree of malice againſt him, who profeſſes to ſuperintend the conduct of others, eſpecially if he ſeats himſelf uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exerciſes authority by his own commiſſion.

You cannot, therefore, wonder that your obſervations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticiſm at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to ſcoff at the retirement of Drugget, there is one who offers his apology.

The miſtake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleaſures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeit. Very few carry their philoſophy to places of diverſion, or are very careful to analyſe their enjoyments. The general condition of life is ſo full of miſery, that we are glad to catch delight without enquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is beſtowed.

The mind is ſeldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not diſturb ourſelves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleaſing effect to inveſtigate it's cauſe. He that is happy, by whatever means, deſires nothing but the continuance of happineſs, and is no more ſolicitous to diſtribute his ſenſations into their proper ſpecies, than the common gazer on the beauties of the ſpring to ſeparate light into it's original rays.

Pleaſure is therefore ſeldom ſuch as it appears to others, nor often ſuch as we repreſent it to ourſelves. Of the ladies that ſparkle at a muſical performance, a very ſmall number has any quick ſenſibility of harmonious ſounds. But every one that goes has her pleaſure. She has the pleaſure of wearing fine clothes, and of ſhewing them; of outſhining thoſe whom ſhe ſuſpects to envy her; ſhe has the pleaſure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals ſeldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the converſations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among thoſe that ſat in the firſt row; ſhe has the pleaſure of returning courteſies, or refuſing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with diſdain. She has the pleaſure of meeting ſome of her acquaintance, of gueſſing why the reſt are abſent, and of telling them that ſhe ſaw the opera, on pretence of enquiring why they would miſs it. She has the pleaſure of being ſuppoſed to be pleaſed with a refined amuſement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votreſſes of harmony. She has the pleaſure of eſcaping for two hours the ſuperiority of a ſiſter, or the controul of a huſband; and from all theſe pleaſures ſhe concludes, that heavenly muſic is the balm of life.

All aſſemblies of gaiety are brought together by motives of the ſame kind. The theatre is not filled with thoſe that know or regard the ſkill of the actor, nor the ball-room by thoſe who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general reſort, where the ſtandard of pleaſure is erected, we run with equal eagerneſs, or appearance of eagerneſs, for

for very different reaſons. One goes that he may ſay he has been there, another becauſe he never miſſes. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to diſcover what others find. Whatever diverſion is coſtly will be frequented by thoſe who deſire to be thought rich; and whatever has, by any accident, become faſhionable, eaſily continues it's reputation, becauſe every one is aſhamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation, and deſire of being pleaſed; we meet others who are brought by the ſame motives; no one will be the firſt to own the diſappointment; one face reflects the ſmile of another, till each believes the reſt delighted, and endeavours to catch and tranſmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happineſs is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at laſt all profeſs the joy which they do not feel, conſent to yield to the general deluſion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliſs is of ſo ſhort a duration.

If Drugget pretended to pleaſures of which he had no perception, or boaſted of one amuſement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all thoſe who read his ſtory? of whom ſome pretend delight in converſation, only becauſe they dare not be alone; ſome praiſe the quiet of ſolitude, becauſe they are envious of ſenſe and impatient of folly; and ſome gratify their pride, by writing characters which expoſe the vanity of life. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant.

N° XIX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 19.

SOME of thoſe ancient ſages that have exerciſed their abilities in the enquiry after the *ſupreme good*, have been of opinion, that the higheſt degree of earthly happineſs is quiet; a calm repoſe both of mind and body, undiſturbed by the ſight of folly or the noiſe of buſineſs, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private intereſt; a ſtate in which the mind has no other employment, but to obſerve and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raiſe ſyſtems of ſcience, and form theories of virtue.

To the ſcheme of theſe ſolitary ſpeculatiſts it has been juſtly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being uſeleſs. That mankind is one vaſt republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labour of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from miſery, none have a right to withdraw from their taſk of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wiſdom or ſolitary pleaſures.

It is common for controvertiſts, in the heat of diſputation, to add one poſition to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falſhood loſe their diſtinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of abſurdity, and then ſtart back from each ſide towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great diſquiſition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet ſhameful, and buſineſs dangerous, and therefore paſs their lives between them, in buſtle without buſineſs, and in negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate ſet is that great philoſopher Jack Whirler, whoſe buſineſs keeps him in perpetual motion, and whoſe motion always eludes his buſineſs; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot ſtand ſtill becauſe he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places becauſe he ſtays in none.

Jack has more buſineſs than he can conveniently tranſact in one houſe; he has therefore one habitation near Bow Church, and another about a mile diſtant. By this ingenious diſtribution of himſelf between two houſes, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. Jack's trade is extenſive, and he has many dealers; his converſation is ſprightly, and he has many companions; his diſpoſition is kind, and he has many friends. Jack neither forbears pleaſure for buſineſs, nor omits buſineſs for pleaſure, but is equally inviſible to his friends and his cuſtomers;

to

to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to ſettle an account.

When you call at his houſe, his clerk tells you, that Mr. Whirler was juſt ſtept out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-houſe till two, and then find that he has been at home, and is gone out again; but left word that he ſhould be at the Half Moon Tavern at ſeven, where he hopes to meet you. At ſeven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. Whirler to tell you, that he is glad to ſee you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, from whom he will return before ſupper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange, to tell thoſe who are waiting for him, that he muſt beg them to defer the buſineſs till to-morrow, becauſe his time is come at the Half Moon.

Jack's chearfulneſs and civility rank him amongſt thoſe whoſe preſence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondneſs and careſſes. He calls often on his friends, to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again to tell them how an unexpected ſummons hurries him away. When he enters a houſe, his firſt declaration is, that he cannot ſit down; and ſo ſhort are his viſits, that he ſeldom appears to have come for any other reaſon but to ſay, He muſt go.

The dogs of Egypt, when thirſt brings them to the Nile, are ſaid to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. Jack Whirler always dines at full ſpeed. He enters, finds the family at table, ſits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but while the firſt morſel is in his mouth, hears the clock ſtrike, and riſes; then goes to another houſe, ſits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taſte the ſoup, makes a ſhort excuſe to the company, and continues through another ſtreet his deſultory dinner.

But overwhelmed as he is with buſineſs, his chief deſire is to have ſtill more. Every new propoſal takes poſſeſſion of his thoughts; he ſoon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almoſt to completion, and then forſakes it for another, which he catches with ſome alacrity, urges with the ſame vehemence, and abandons with the ſame coldneſs.

Every man may be obſerved to have a certain ſtrain of lamentation, ſome peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. Jack's topic of ſorrow is the want of time. Many an excellent deſign languiſhes in empty theory for want of time. For the omiſſion of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuſe to himſelf. That he wants time, he ſincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering diſtemper, for want of time to attend his health.

Thus Jack Whirler lives in perpetual fatigue without proportionate advantage, becauſe he does not conſider that no man can ſee all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of buſineſs, muſt tranſact much by ſubſtitution, and leave ſomething to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waſte his life in doing little.

N° XX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 26.

THERE is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be ſocial beings no longer than they believe each other. When ſpeech is employed only as the vehicle of falſhood, every man muſt diſunite himſelf from others, inhabit his own cave, and ſeek prey only for himſelf.

Yet the law of truth, thus ſacred and neceſſary, is broken without puniſhment, without cenſure, in compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing paſſions. Men are willing to credit what they wiſh, and encourage rather thoſe who gratify them with pleaſure, than thoſe that inſtruct them with fidelity.

For this reaſon every hiſtorian diſcovers his country, and it is impoſſible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wiſh that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidſt the joy of my countrymen for the acquiſition of Louiſbourg, I could not forbear to conſider how differently this

this revolution of American power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be repreſented by the writers of another century.

The Engliſh hiſtorian will imagine himſelf barely doing juſtice to Engliſh virtue, when he relates the capture of Louiſbourg in the following manner.

'The Engliſh had hitherto ſeen, with great indignation, their attempts baffled, and their force defied, by an enemy, whom they conſidered themſelves as intitled to conquer by the right of preſcription, and whom many ages of hereditary ſuperiority had taught them to deſpiſe. Their fleets were more numerous, and their ſeamen braver than thoſe of France, yet they only floated uſeleſs on the ocean, and the French derided them from their ports. Misfortunes, as is uſual, produced diſcontent, the people murmured at the miniſters, and the miniſters cenſured the commanders.

'In the ſummer of this year, the Engliſh began to find their ſucceſs anſwerable to their cauſe. A fleet and an army were ſent to America, to diſlodge the enemies from the ſettlements which they had ſo perfidiouſly made, and ſo inſolently maintained, and to repreſs that power which was growing more every day by the aſſociation of the Indians, with whom theſe degenerate Europeans intermarried, and whom they ſecured to their party by preſents and promiſes.

'In the beginning of June the ſhips of war and veſſels containing the land forces appeared before Louiſbourg, a place ſo ſecure by nature, that art was almoſt ſuperfluous, and yet fortified by art as if nature had left it open. The French boaſted that it was impregnable, and ſpoke with ſcorn of all attempts that could be made againſt it. The garriſon was numerous, the ſtores equal to the longeſt ſiege, and their engineers and commanders high in reputation. The mouth of the harbour was ſo narrow, that three ſhips within might eaſily defend it againſt all attacks from the ſea. The French had, with that caution which cowards borrow from fear and attribute to policy, eluded our fleets, and ſent into that port five great ſhips and ſix ſmaller, of which they ſunk four in the mouth of the paſſage, having raiſed batteries, and poſted troops, at all the places where they thought it poſſible to make a deſcent. The Engliſh, however, had more to dread from the roughneſs of the ſea, than from the ſkill or bravery of the defendants. Some days paſſed before the ſurges, which riſe very high round that iſland, would ſuffer them to land. At laſt their impatience could be reſtrained no longer; they got poſſeſſion of the ſhore with little loſs by the ſea, and with leſs by the enemy. In a few days the artillery was landed, the batteries were raiſed, and the French had no other hope than to eſcape from one poſt to another. A ſhot from the batteries fired the powder in one of their largeſt ſhips, the flame ſpread to the two next, and all three were deſtroyed; the Engliſh admiral ſent his boats againſt the two large ſhips yet remaining, took them without reſiſtance, and terrified the garriſon to an immediate capitulation.'

Let us now oppoſe to this Engliſh narrative the relation which will be produced, about the ſame time, by the writer of the age of Louis XV.

'About this time the Engliſh admitted to the conduct of affairs, a man who undertook to ſave from deſtruction that ferocious and turbulent people, who, from the mean inſolence of wealthy traders, and the lawleſs confidence of ſucceſsful robbers, were now ſunk in deſpair and ſtupified with horror. He called in the ſhips which had been diſperſed ever the ocean to guard their merchants, and ſent a fleet and an army, in which almoſt the whole ſtrength of England was compriſed, to ſecure their poſſeſſions in America, which were endangered alike by the French arms and the French virtue. We had taken the Engliſh fortreſſes by force, and gained the Indian nations by humanity. The Engliſh, wherever they come, are ſure to have the natives for their enemies; for the only motive of their ſettlements is avarice, and the only conſequence of their ſucceſs is oppreſſion. In this war they acted like other barbarians; and, with a degree of outrageous cruelty, which the gentleneſs of our manners ſcarce ſuffers us to conceive, offered rewards by open proclamation to thoſe who ſhould bring in the ſcalps of Indian women and children. A trader always makes war with the cruelty of a pirate.

'They had long looked with envy and with terror upon the influence which the French exerted over all the Northern regions of America by the poſſeſſion of Louiſbourg, a place naturally ſtrong,

and new fortified with ſome ſlight outworks. They hoped to ſurpriſe the garriſon unprovided; but that ſluggiſhneſs which always defeats their malice, gave us time to ſend ſupplies, and to ſtation ſhips for the defence of the harbour. They came before Louiſbourg in June, and were for ſome time in doubt whether they ſhould land. But the commanders, who had lately ſeen an admiral beheaded for not having done what he had not power to do, durſt not leave the place unaſſaulted. An Engliſhman has no ardour for honour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory, nor loves his king; but balances one danger with another, and will fight rather than be hanged. They therefore landed, but with great loſs: their engineers had, in the laſt war with the French, learned ſomething of the military ſciences, and made their approaches with ſufficient ſkill; but all their efforts had been without effect, had not a ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one of our ſhips, which communicated the fire to the reſt, and, by opening the paſſage of the harbour, obliged the garriſon to capitulate. Thus was Louiſbourg loſt, and our troops marched out with the admiration of their enemies who durſt hardly think themſelves maſters of the place."

N° XXI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THERE is a ſpecies of miſery or of diſeaſe, for which our language is commonly ſuppoſed to be without a name, but which I think is emphatically enough denominated *liſtleſsneſs*, and which is commonly termed a want of ſomething to do.

Of the unhappineſs of this ſtate I do not expect all your readers to have an adequate idea. Many are overburthened with buſineſs, and can imagine no comfort but in reſt; many have minds ſo placid, as willingly to indulge a voluntary lethargy; or ſo narrow, as eaſily to be filled to their utmoſt capacity. By theſe I ſhall not be underſtood, and therefore cannot be pitied. Thoſe only will ſympathiſe with my complaint, whoſe imagination is active and reſolution weak, whoſe deſires are ardent, and whoſe choice is delicate; who cannot ſatisfy themſelves with ſtanding ſtill, and yet cannot find a motive to direct their courſe.

I was the ſecond ſon of a gentleman, whoſe eſtate was barely ſufficient to ſupport himſelf and his heir in the dignity of killing game. He therefore made uſe of the intereſt which the alliances of his family afforded him, to procure me a poſt in the army. I paſſed ſome years in the moſt contemptible of all human ſtations, that of a ſoldier in time of peace. I wandered with the regiment as the quarters were changed, without opportunity for buſineſs, taſte for knowledge, or money for pleaſure. Wherever I came, I was for ſometime a ſtranger without curioſity, and afterwards an acquaintance without friendſhip. Having nothing to hope in theſe places of fortuitous reſidence, I reſigned my conduct to chance; I had no intention to offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I ſuppoſe every man is ſhocked when he hears how frequently ſoldiers are wiſhing for war. The wiſh is not always ſincere; the greater part are content with ſleep and lace, and counterfeit an ardour which they do not feel; but thoſe who deſire it moſt, are neither prompted by malevolence nor patriotiſm; they neither pant for laurels, nor delight in blood; but long to be delivered from the tyranny of idleneſs, and reſtored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myſelf to have more courage than other men, yet was often involuntarily wiſhing for a war, but of a war at that time I had no proſpect; and being enabled, by the death of an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted the army, and reſolved to regulate my own motions.

I was pleaſed for a while with the novelty of independence, and imagined that I had now found what every man deſires. My time was in my own power, and my habitation was wherever my choice ſhould fix it. I amuſed myſelf for two years, in paſſing from place to place, and comparing one convenience with another; but being at laſt aſhamed of enquiry, and weary of uncertainty, I purchaſed a houſe, and eſtabliſhed my family.

I now

I now expected to begin to be happy, and was happy for a ſhort time with that expectation. But I ſoon perceived my ſpirits to ſubſide, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day round me. I wondered by what malignant power my peace was blaſted, till I diſcovered at laſt that I had nothing to do.

Time, with all it's celerity, moves ſlowly to him, whoſe whole employment is to watch it's flight. I am forced upon a thouſand ſhifts to enable me to endure the tediouſneſs of the day. I riſe when I can ſleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I ſee what I have ſeen before, and return. I ſit down, and perſuade myſelf that I ſit down to think, find it impoſſible to think without a ſubject, riſe up to enquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myſelf an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any conſequence to me, but that a few minutes they abſtract me from myſelf.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curioſity, I am buſied, for a while, in running to relate it. I haſten from one place of concourſe to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing ſomething, though I know that another hour would ſpare my labour.

I had once a round of viſits, which I paid very regularly, but I have now tired moſt of my friends. When I have ſat down I forget to riſe, and have more than once over-heard one aſking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I obſerve the miſtreſs of the family whiſpering to her ſervants, I find others given to put off buſineſs till to-morrow, I ſee the watches frequently inſpected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of ſolitude, or venture myſelf in my own company.

Thus burthenſome to myſelf and others, I form many ſchemes of employment which may make my life uſeful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by ſufferance. This new courſe I have long deſigned, but have not yet begun. The preſent moment is never proper for the change, but there is always a time in view when all obſtacles will be removed, and I ſhall ſurprize all that know me with a new diſtribution of my time. Twenty years have paſſed ſince I have reſolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been loſt in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I ſhould look back with rage and deſpair upon the waſte of life, but that I am now beginning in earneſt to begin a reformation. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

DICK LINGER.

N° XXII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

AS I was paſſing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was ſtruck with horror by a rueful cry, which ſummoned me *to remember the poor debtors*.

The wiſdom and juſtice of the Engliſh laws are, by Engliſhmen at leaſt, loudly celebrated; but ſcarcely the moſt zealous admirers of our inſtitutions can think that law wiſe, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or juſt, which expoſes the liberty of one to the paſſions of another.

The proſperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds uſefully employed. To the community, ſedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleneſs an atrophy. Whatever body, and whatever ſociety, waſtes more than it acquires, muſt gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceaſes to labour, takes away ſomething from the publick ſtock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the ſloth and darkneſs of a priſon, is a loſs to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in thoſe cells of miſery, a very ſmall part is ſuſpected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The reſt are impriſoned by the wantonneſs of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of diſappointed expectation.

If thoſe, who thus rigorouſly exerciſe the power which the law has put into their hands, be aſked, why they con-

tinue to impriſon thoſe whom they know to be unable to pay them; one will anſwer, that his debtor once lived better than himſelf; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in ſilk cloaths to the dancing-ſchool; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they ſhould meet with the ſame treatment; ſome, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confeſs their reſolution, that their debtors ſhall rot in jail; and ſome will diſcover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is to ſecure private happineſs from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another; but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loſs, is allowed to be the judge of his own cauſe, and to aſſign the puniſhment of his own pain; when the diſtinction between guilt and happineſs, between caſualty and deſign, is entruſted to eyes blind with intereſt, to underſtandings depraved by reſentment.

Since poverty is puniſhed among us as a crime, it ought at leaſt to be treated with the ſame lenity as other crimes; the offender ought not to languiſh at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed ſome appeal to the juſtice of his country. There can be no reaſon why any debtor ſhould be impriſoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term ſhould therefore be fixed, in which the creditor ſhould exhibit his accuſation of concealed property. If ſuch property can be diſcovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the priſoner be diſmiſſed.

Thoſe who made the laws, have apparently ſuppoſed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always ſhares the act, and often more than ſhares the guilt of improper truſt. It ſeldom happens that any man impriſons another but for debts which he ſuffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himſelf, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reaſon, why one ſhould puniſh the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of priſons may juſtly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by encreaſing his debt. Worſe and worſe commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoveriſhed by compulſive traffick, and at laſt overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of miſery, by debts, which, without his own conſent were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this diſtreſs, no other objection can be made, but that by an eaſy diſſolution of debts, fraud will be left without puniſhment, and imprudence without awe; and that when inſolvency ſhall be no longer puniſhable, credit will ceaſe.

The motive to credit, is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a ſtop, while one man wants what another can ſupply; and credit will never be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that truſts one whom he deſigns to ſue, is criminal by the act of truſt; the ceſſation of ſuch inſidious traffick is to be deſired, and no reaſon can be given why a change of the law ſhould impair any other.

We ſee nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to ſatisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loſs of trade.

It is vain to continue an inſtitution, which experience ſhews to be ineffectual. We have now impriſoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers leſſen. We have now learned, that raſhneſs and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more eaſily reſtrained from giving it. I am, Sir. &c.

N° XXIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23.

LIFE has no pleaſure higher or nobler than that of Friendſhip. It is painful to conſider, that this ſublime enjoyment may be impaired or deſtroyed by innumerable cauſes, and that there is no human poſſeſſion of which the duration is leſs certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language of the perpetuity of friendſhip, of invincible conſtancy, and unalienable kindneſs; and ſome examples have been ſeen of men who have continued faithful to their earlieſt choice, and whoſe affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But theſe inſtances are memorable, becauſe they are rare. The friendſhip which is to be practiſed or expected by common mortals, muſt take it's riſe from mutual pleaſure, and muſt end when the power ceaſes of delighting other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by which the ardour of kindneſs will be abated, without criminal baſeneſs or contemptible inconſtancy on either part. To give pleaſure is not always in our power; and little does he know himſelf, who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Thoſe who would gladly paſs their days together may be ſeparated by the different courſe of their affairs; and friendſhip, like love, is deſtroyed by long abſence, though it may be encreaſed by ſhort intermiſſions. What we have miſſed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been loſt till it is forgotten, will be found at laſt with little gladneſs, and with ſtill leſs if a ſubſtitute has ſupplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he uſed to open his boſom, and with whom he ſhared the hours of leiſure and merriment, feels the day at firſt hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppreſs, and his doubts diſtract him; he ſees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is ſadneſs within and ſolitude about him. But this uneaſineſs never laſts long; neceſſity produces expedients, new amuſements are diſcovered, and new converſation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently diſappointed, than that which naturally ariſes in the mind from the proſpect of meeting an old friend after long ſeparation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man conſiders how much alteration time has made in himſelf, and very few enquire what effect it has had upon others. The firſt hour convinces them, that the pleaſure which they have formerly enjoyed is for ever at an end; different ſcenes have made different impreſſions; the opinions of both are changed; and that ſimilitude of manners and ſentiment is loſt, which confirmed them both in the approbation of themſelves.

Friendſhip is often deſtroyed by oppoſition of intereſt, not only by the ponderous and viſible intereſt which the deſire of wealth and greatneſs forms and maintains, but by a thouſand ſecret and ſlight competitions, ſcarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is ſcarcely any man without ſome favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, ſome deſire of petty praiſe which he cannot patiently ſuffer to be fruſtrated. This minute ambition is ſometimes croſſed before it is known, and ſometimes defeated by wanton petulance: but ſuch attacks are ſeldom made without the loſs of friendſhip; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the reſentment will burn on in ſecret of which ſhame hinders the diſcovery.

This, however, is a ſlow malignity, which a wiſe man will obviate as inconſiſtent with quiet, and a good man will repreſs as contrary to virtue; but human happineſs is ſometimes violated by ſome more ſudden ſtrokes.

A diſpute begun in jeſt, upon a ſubject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careleſs indifference, is continued by the deſire of conqueſt, till vanity kindles into rage, and oppoſition rankles into enmity. Againſt this haſty miſchief, I know not what ſecurity can be obtained: men will be ſometimes ſurprized into quarrels; and though they might both haſten to reconciliation, as ſoon as their tumult had ſubſided,

ſubſided, yet two minds will ſeldom be found together, which can at once ſubdue their diſcontent, or immediately enjoy the ſweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendſhip has other enemies. Suſpicion is always hardening the cautious, and diſguſt repelling the delicate. Very ſlender differences will ſometimes part thoſe whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. Lonelove and Ranger retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in ſix weeks cold and petulant. Ranger's pleaſure was to walk in the fields, and Lonelove's to ſit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The moſt fatal diſeaſe of friendſhip is gradual decay, or diſlike hourly encreaſed by cauſes too ſlender for complaint, and too numerous for removal. Thoſe who are angry may be reconciled; thoſe who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the deſire of pleaſing and willingneſs to be pleaſed is ſilently diminiſhed, the renovation of friendſhip is hopeleſs; as, when the vital powers ſink into languor, there is no longer any uſe of the phyſician.

N° XXIV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30.

WHEN man ſees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree, or baſking in the ſunſhine, without any apparent endeavour or purſuit, he often aſks himſelf, or his companion—'On what that animal can be ſuppoſed 'to be thinking?'

Of this queſtion, ſince neither bird nor beaſt can anſwer it, we muſt be content to live without the reſolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the paſt, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not reſt in motionleſs indifference, till they are moved by the preſence of their proper object, or ſtimulated to act by corporal ſenſations.

I am the leſs inclined to theſe ſuperfluous enquiries, becauſe I have always been able to find ſufficient matter for curioſity in my own ſpecies. It is uſeleſs to go far in queſt of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of obſervation will ſupply a ſufficient number of men and women, who might be aſked with equal propriety—'On 'what they can be thinking?'

It is reaſonable to believe, that thought, like every thing elſe, has it's cauſes and effects; that it muſt proceed from ſomething known, done, or ſuffered; and muſt produce ſome action or event. Yet how great is the number of thoſe in whoſe minds no ſource of thought has ever been opened, in whoſe life no conſequence of thought is ever diſcovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither ſeen nor felt any thing which could leave it's traces on the memory; who neither foreſee nor deſire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor deſign, and yet are ſuppoſed to be thinking beings.

To every act a ſubject is required. He that thinks, muſt think upon ſomething. But tell me, ye that pierce deepeſt into nature, ye that take the wideſt ſurveys of life, inform me, kind ſhades of Malbranche, and of Locke, what that ſomething can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with ſmall fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from buſineſs; in ſoldiers abſent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly conſidered as either active or contemplative; but ſurely this diviſion, how long ſoever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whoſe life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whoſe life cannot be properly called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men, or the works of Nature, but riſe in the morning, look round them till night in careleſs ſtupidity, go to bed and ſleep, and riſe again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated queſtion in the ſchools of philoſophy, *Whether the ſoul always thinks?* Some have defined the ſoul to be the *power of thinking*; concluded that it's eſſence conſiſts in act; that if it ſhould ceaſe to act, it would ceaſe to be; and that ceſſation of thought

thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is ſubtle, but not concluſive; becauſe it ſuppoſes, what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to diſdain ſubtilty, when ſubtilty will not ſerve their purpoſe, and appeal to daily experience. We ſpend many hours, they ſay, in ſleep, without the leaſt remembrance of any thoughts which then paſſed in our minds: and ſince we can only by our own conſciouſneſs be ſure that we think, why ſhould we imagine that we have had thought of which no conſciouſneſs remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do ſomething which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by conſequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been paſſed in thought; yet he that ſhall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find that the greater part is irrevocably vaniſhed, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave ſo little behind them.

To diſcover only that the arguments on both ſides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into it's former uncertainty, is the ſport of wanton or malevolent ſcepticiſm, delighting to ſee the ſons of Philoſophy at work upon a taſk which never can be finiſhed; at variance on a queſtion that can never be decided. I ſhall ſuggeſt an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controverſy.

If it be impoſſible to think without materials, there muſt neceſſarily be minds that do not always think; and whence ſhall we furniſh materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the ſportſman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent ſoever may be the examples of exiſtence without thought, it is certainly a ſtate not much to be deſired. He that lives in tropid inſenſibility, wants nothing of a carcaſe but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleaſures of his fellow beings; and, as in a road through a country defart and uniform, the traveller languiſhes for want of amuſement, ſo the paſſage of life will be tedious and irkſome to him who does not beguile it by diverſified ideas.

N° XXV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Am a very conſtant frequenter of the playhouſe, a place to which I ſuppoſe the Idler not much a ſtranger, ſince he can have no where elſe ſo much entertainment with ſo little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other aſſemblies, he that comes to receive delight, will be expected to give it; but in the theatre, nothing is neceſſary to the amuſement of two hours, but to ſit down and be willing to be pleaſed.

The laſt week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are the great events of the theatrical world; and their firſt performances fill the pit with conjecture and prognoſtication, as the firſt actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of theſe candidates for dramatic glory, it is not neceſſary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleaſure than any borrowed character can afford. I ſaw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who ſhould moſt effectually aſſiſt the ſtruggles of endeavour, diſſipate the bluſh of diffidence, and ſtill the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is ſuch as becomes a people, too tender to repreſs thoſe who wiſh to pleaſe, too generous to inſult thoſe who can make no reſiſtance. A public performer is ſo much in the power of ſpectators, that all unneceſſary ſeverity is reſtrained by that general law of humanity, which forbids us to be cruel where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer ſomething muſt be pardoned. No man can, by any force of reſolution, ſecure to himſelf the full poſſeſſion of his own powers under the

the eye of a large aſſembly. Variation of geſture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which ſuch numbers think themſelves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice muſical to his own ear, and a ſenſibility which Nature forbids him to know that any other boſom can excel. An art in which ſuch numbers fancy themſelves excellent, and which the public liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there muſt be many miſcarriages.

The care of the critic ſhould be to diſtinguiſh error from inability, faults of inexperience from defects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement and confuſed may be reſtrained and modulated; the ſtalk of the tyrant may become the gait of a man; the yell of inarticulate diſtreſs may be reduced to human lamentation. All theſe faults ſhould be for a time overlooked, and afterwards cenſured with gentleneſs and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a ſtupid languor, a torpid apathy, the greateſt kindneſs that can be ſhewn him, is a ſpeedy ſentence of expulſion.

I am, Sir, &c.

The plea which my correſpondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wiſhing to invalidate. I always conſidered thoſe combinations which are ſometimes formed in the playhouſe, as acts of fraud or of cruelty: he that applauds him who does not deſerve praiſe, is endeavouring to deceive the public; he that hiſſes in malice or ſport, is an oppreſſor and a robber.

But ſurely this laudable forbearance might be juſtly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by ſlow degrees. The power of diſtinguiſhing and diſcriminating comic characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, muſt be the gift of Nature, which no inſtruction nor labour can ſupply; but the art of dramatic diſpoſition, the contexture of the ſcenes, the oppoſition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of ſuſpenſion, and the ſtratagems of ſurprize, are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to diſcourage a poet for ever, becauſe he has not from genius what only experience can beſtow.

Life is a ſtage. Let me likewiſe ſolicit candour for the young actor on the ſtage of life. They that enter into the world are too often treated with unreaſonable rigour by thoſe that were once as ignorant and heady as themſelves; and diſtinction is not always made between the faults which require ſpeedy and violent eradication, and thoſe that will gradually drop away in the progreſſion of life. Vicious ſolicitations of appetite, if not checked, will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather ſtrength in the mind, if they are not early ſuppreſſed. But miſtaken notions of ſuperiority, deſires of uſeleſs ſhew, pride of little accompliſhments, and all the train of vanity, will be bruſhed away by the wing of time.

Reproof ſhould not exhauſt it's power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently againſt the incurſion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themſelves.

N° XXVI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14.

MR. IDLER,

I Never thought that I ſhould write any thing to be printed; but having lately ſeen your firſt Eſſay, which was ſent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and uſeleſs papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correſpondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publiſh my letter, it may encourage others, in the ſame condition with myſelf to tell their ſtories, which may be perhaps as uſeful as thoſe of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-ſchool, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patroneſſes, viſited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and ſaw that our cloaths were clean. We lived happily enough, and were inſtructed to be thankful to thoſe at whoſe coſt we were educated.

I was

I was always the favourite of my miſtreſs; ſhe uſed to call me to read and ſhew my copy-book to all ſtrangers, who never diſmiſſed me without commendation, and very ſeldom without a ſhilling.

At laſt the chief of our ſubſcribers, having paſſed a winter in London, came down full of an opinion new and ſtrange to the whole country. She held it little leſs than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. 'They who are born 'to poverty,' ſhe ſaid, 'are born to ig-'norance, and will work the harder the 'leſs they know.' She told her friends, that London was in confuſion by the inſolence of ſervants; that ſcarcely a wench was to be got *for all work*, ſince education had made ſuch numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting maid, or ſomething that might qualify her to wear laced ſhoes and long ruffles, and to ſit at work in the parlour-window. But ſhe was reſolved, for her part, to ſpoil no more girls? thoſe who were to live by their hands, ſhould neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and ſhe would have no part in making it worſe.

She was for a ſhort time warmly oppoſed, but ſhe perſevered in her notions, and withdrew her ſubſcription. Few liſten without a deſire of conviction to thoſe who adviſe them to ſpare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily, and in leſs than a year the whole pariſh was convinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our ſchool was now diſſolved; my miſtreſs kiſſed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpleſs, ſhe could not aſſiſt me, adviſed me to ſeek a ſervice, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for ſcholarſhip, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, conſidered as a crime; and, when I offered myſelf to any miſtreſs, I had no other anſwer than—'Sure, child, you 'would not work; hard work is not fit 'for a pen-woman; a ſcrubbing-bruſh 'would ſpoil your hand, child!'

I could not live at home; and while I was conſidering to what I ſhould betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our ſchool to London, came down in a ſilk gown, and told her acquaintance how well ſhe lived, what fine things ſhe ſaw, and what great wages ſhe received. I reſolved to try my fortune, and took my paſſage in the next week's waggon to London. I had no ſnares laid for me at my arrival, but came ſafe to a ſiſter of my miſtreſs, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradeſmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the firſt offer.

My firſt miſtreſs was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was ſufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their conſtant practice to hire a chaiſe on Sunday, and ſpend half the wages of the week on Richmond Hill; of Monday he commonly lay half in bed, and ſpent the other half in merriment; Tueſday and Wedneſday conſumed the reſt of his money; and three days every week were paſſed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my my maſter lived on truſt at an alehouſe. You may be ſure, that of the ſufferers the maid ſuffered moſt; and I left them, after three months, rather than be ſtarved.

I was then maid to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury. My miſtreſs was a diligent woman, and roſe early in the morning to ſet the journeymen to work; my maſter was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and ſat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my maſter at night, and on my miſtreſs in the morning. He ſeldom came home before two, and ſhe roſe at five. I could no more live without ſleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another ſervant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had ſix children. My miſtreſs, when I firſt entered the houſe, informed me, that I muſt never contradict the children, nor ſuffer them to cry. I had no deſire to offend, and readily promiſed to do my beſt. But when I gave them their breakfaſt, I could not help all firſt; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the reſt in expectation. That which was not gratified always reſented the injury with a loud outcry, which put my miſtreſs in a fury at me, and procured ſugar-plums to the child. I could not keep ſix chil-

dren quiet, who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore dismissed, as a girl honest, but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty shop of remnants and cheap linen. I was qualified to make a bill, or keep a book; and being therefore often called, at a busy time, to serve the customers, expected that I should now be happy, in proportion as I was useful. But my mistress appropriated every day part of the profit to some private use, and, as she grew bolder in her theft, at last deducted such sums, that my master began to wonder how he sold so much, and gained so little. She pretended to assist his enquiries, and began very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honest, and yet those sharp girls were apt to be light-fingered.* You will believe that I did not stay there much longer.

The rest of my story I will tell you in another letter; and only beg to be informed, in some paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the last, I was disqualified, by my skill in reading and writing. I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

BETTY BROOM.

N° XXVII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12.

IT has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has reverenced for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evils he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with serious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their own minds without meeting what they wish to hide from themselves, scarce any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of enquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better, but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the state of their minds; satisfied, at an easy rate, with an opinion, that they are no worse than others, that every man must mind his own interest, or that their pleasures only hurt themselves, and are therefore no proper subjects of censure.

Some, however, there are, whom the intrusion of scruples, the recollection of better notions, or the latent reprehension of good examples, will not suffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; these are forced to pacify the mutiny of reason with fair promises, and quiet their thoughts with designs of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new scheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master; and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end, through all the obstructions that inconveniencies or delights can put in his way.

That this mistake should prevail for a time, is very natural. When conviction is present, and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his true interest. What ought to be done while it yet only hangs in speculation, is so plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at last omitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives that have passed within their observation, without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion; or an establishment

of

of determination. Many indeed alter their conduct, and are not at fifty what they were at thirty, but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themſelves, followed the train of external cauſes, and rather ſuffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promiſe and performance, between profeſſion and reality, upon deep deſign and ſtudied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocriſy in the world; we do not ſo often endeavour or wiſh to impoſe on others as on ourſelves; we reſolve to do right, we hope to keep our reſolutions, we declare them to confirm our own hope, and fix our own inconſtancy by calling witneſſes of our actions; but at laſt habit prevails, and thoſe whom we invited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Cuſtom is commonly too ſtrong for the moſt reſolute reſolver, though furniſhed for the aſſault with all the weapons of philoſophy. 'He that endeavours to 'free himſelf from an ill habit,' ſays Bacon, 'muſt not change too much at 'a time, leſt he ſhould be diſcouraged 'by difficulty; nor too little, for then 'he will make but ſlow advances.' This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Thoſe who have been able to conquer habit, are like thoſe that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto:

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, aut ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are ſufficient to give hope, but not ſecurity; to animate the conteſt, but not to promiſe victory.

Thoſe who are in the power of evil habits muſt conquer them as they can; and conquered they muſt be, or neither wiſdom nor happineſs can be attained: but thoſe who are not yet ſubject to their influence may, by timely caution, preſerve their freedom; they may effectually reſolve to eſcape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly reſolve to conquer.

N° XXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

IT is very eaſy for a man who ſits idle at home, and has nobody to pleaſe but himſelf, to ridicule or to cenſure the common practices of mankind; and thoſe who have no preſent temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgment, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themſelves irreſiſtibly borne away by the ſtream of cuſtom, and muſt ſubmit, after they have laughed at others, to give others the ſame opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper publiſhed by the Idler which I have read with more approbation than that which cenſures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the news-papers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all thoſe whom I ſuſpected of having publiſhed their nuptials, or of being inclined to publiſh them, and ſent tranſcripts of it to all the couples that tranſgreſſed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleated myſelf with imagining their miſery.

But ſhort is the triumph of malignity. I was married laſt week to Miſs Mohair, the daughter of a ſaleſman; and at my firſt appearance after the wedding night, was aſked by my wife's mother, whether I had ſent our marriage to the Advertiſer? I endeavoured to ſhew how unfit it was to demand the attention of the public to our domeſtick affairs; but ſhe told me, with great vehemence, That ſhe would not have it thought to be a ſtolen match; that the blood of the Mohairs ſhould never be diſgraced; that her huſband had ſerved all the pariſh offices but one; that ſhe had lived five and thirty years at the ſame houſe, had paid every body twenty ſhillings in the pound, and would have me know, though ſhe was not as fine and as flaunting as Mrs. Ginghum, the deputy's wife, ſhe was not aſhamed to tell her name, and would ſhew her face with the beſt of them; and ſince I had married her daughter— At this inſtant entered my father-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expected ſuccour; but, upon hearing the caſe, he told me, That it would be very imprudent to miſs ſuch an opportunity of advertiſing

my ſhop; and that, when notice was given of my marriage, many of my wife's friends would think themſelves obliged to be my cuſtomers. I was ſubdued by clamour on one ſide, and gravity on the other; and ſhall be obliged to tell the town, that *three days ago*, Timothy Muſhroom, *an eminent oil-man in* Sea-Coal Lane, *was married to* Miſs Polly Mohair *of* Lothbury, *a beautiful young lady, with a large fortune.*

I am, Sir, &c.

SIR,

I Am the unfortunate wife of the grocer whoſe letter you publiſhed about ten weeks ago; in which he complains, like a ſorrow fellow, that I loiter in the ſhop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on Sundays, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. Idler, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to ſuch an unreaſonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which ſet him up in a ſhop, and bought in a ſtock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a ſhop, I am forced to watch him and the ſhop too. I will tell you, Mr. Idler, how it is. There is an alehouſe over the way with a ninepin alley, to which he is ſure to run when I turn my back, and there loſes his money, for he plays at ninepins as he does every thing elſe. While he is at this favourite ſport, he ſets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his cuſtomers; but he is long in coming, and ſo rude when he comes, that our cuſtom falls off every day.

Thoſe who cannot govern themſelves, muſt be governed. I have reſolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his cuſtomers if he dares. I cannot be above ſtairs and below at the ſame time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child and dreſs the dinner; and, after all, pray who is to blame?

On a Sunday, it is true, I make him walk abroad, and ſometimes carry the child; I wonder who ſhould carry it! But I never take him out till after church-time, nor would do it then, but that, if he is left alone, he will be upon the bed. On a Sunday, if he ſtays at home, he has ſix meals; and, when he can eat no longer, has twenty ſtratagems to eſcape from me to the alehouſe; but I commonly keep the door locked, till Monday produces ſomething for him to do.

This is the true ſtate of the caſe, and theſe are the provocations for which he has written his letter to you. I hope you will write a paper to ſhew, that, if a wife muſt ſpend her whole time in watching her huſband, ſhe cannot conveniently tend her child, or ſit at her needle. I am, Sir, &c.

SIR,

THERE is in this town a ſpecies of oppreſſion which the law has not hitherto prevented or redreſſed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we come when we are called, and are expected to carry all who require our aſſiſtance. It is common for men of the moſt unweildy corpulence to croud themſelves into a chair, and demand to be carried for a ſhilling as far as an airy young lady whom we ſcarcely feel upon our poles. Surely we ought to be paid like all other mortals in proportion to our labour. Engines ſhould be fixed in proper places to weigh chairs as they weigh waggons; and thoſe whom eaſe and plenty have made unable to carry themſelves, ſhould give part of their ſuperfluities to thoſe who carry them.

I am, Sir, &c.

N° XXIX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Have often obſerved, that friends are loſt by diſcontinuance of intercourſe without any offence on either part; and have long known, that it is more dangerous to be forgotten than to be blamed; I therefore make haſte to ſend you the reſt of my ſtory, leſt, by the delay of another fortnight, the name of Betty Broom might be no longer remembered by you or your readers.

Having left the laſt place in haſte to avoid the charge or the ſuſpicion of theft,

I had

I had not ſecured another ſervice, and was forced to take a lodging in a back ſtreet. I had now got good cloaths. The woman who lived in the garret oppoſite to mine was very officious, and offered to take care of my room and clean it, while I went round to my acquaintance to enquire for a miſtreſs. I knew not why ſhe was ſo kind, or how I could recompenſe her; but in a few days I miſſed ſome of my linen, went to another lodging, and reſolved not to have another friend in the next garret.

In ſix weeks I became under-maid at the houſe of a mercer in Cornhill, whoſe ſon was his apprentice. The young gentleman uſed to ſit late at the tavern, without the knowledge of his father; and I was ordered by my miſtreſs to let him in ſilently to his bed under the counter, and to be very careful to take away his candle. The hours which I was obliged to watch, whilſt the reſt of the family was in bed, I conſidered as ſupernumerary, and, having no buſineſs aſſigned for them, thought myſelf at liberty to ſpend them my own way. I kept myſelf awake with a book, and for ſome time liked my ſtate the better for this opportunity of reading. At laſt, the upper-maid found my book, and ſhewed it to my miſtreſs, who told me, that wenches like me might ſpend their time better; that ſhe never knew any of the readers that had good deſigns in their heads; that ſhe could always find ſomething elſe to do with her time, than to puzzle over books; and did not like that ſuch a fine lady ſhould ſit up for her young maſter.

This was the firſt time that I found it thought criminal or dangerous to know how to read. I was diſmiſſed decently, leſt I ſhould tell tales, and had a ſmall gratuity above my wages.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a ſmall fortune. This was the only happy part of my life. My miſtreſs, for whom publick diverſions were too expenſive, ſpent her time with books, and was pleaſed to find a maid who could partake her amuſements. I roſe early in the morning, that I might have time in the afternoon to read or liſten, and was ſuffered to tell my opinion, or expreſs my delight. Thus fifteen months ſtole away, in which I did not repine that I was born to ſervitude. But a burning fever ſeized my miſtreſs, of whom I ſhall ſay no more, than that her ſervant wept upon her grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury, which made me very unfit for another place; and was rather too delicate for the converſation of a kitchen; ſo that when I was hired in the family of an Eaſt India director, my behaviour was ſo different, as they ſaid, from that of a common ſervant, that they concluded me a gentlewoman in diſguiſe, and turned me out in three weeks, on ſuſpicion of ſome deſign which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obſtruction from my new accompliſhments, and was hired under the houſekeeper in a ſplendid family. Here I was too wiſe for the maids, and too nice for the footmen; yet I might have lived on without much uneaſineſs, had not my miſtreſs, the houſekeeper, who uſed to employ me in buying neceſſaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expences. I ſuppoſe it did not quite agree with her own book, for ſhe fiercely declared her reſolution, that there ſhould be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the juſtice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was eaſily admitted into another houſe in the neighbourhood, where my buſineſs was to ſweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was, for ſome time, the favourite of Mrs. Simper, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of ſome education. Mrs. Simper loved a novel, though ſhe could not read hard words; and therefore, when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At laſt, my abilities became ſo much celebrated, that the houſe-ſteward uſed to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. Simper then found out, that my ſaucineſs was grown to ſuch a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there never had been a room well ſwept ſince Betty Broom came into the houſe.

I was then hired by a conſumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though ſhe was never pleaſed, yet when I declared my reſolution to leave her, ſhe burſt into tears, and told me that I muſt bear the peeviſhneſs of a

ſick

ſick bed, and I ſhould find myſelf remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in leſs than a week, when I ſet her gruel before her, I laid the ſpoon on the left ſide, and ſhe threw her will into the fire. In two days ſhe made another, which ſhe burnt in the ſame manner becauſe ſhe could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and deſtroyed becauſe ſhe heard a mouſe within the wainſcot, and was ſure that I ſhould ſuffer her to be carried away alive. After this I was for ſome time out of favour; but as her illneſs grew upon her, reſentment and ſullenneſs gave way to kinder ſentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds. With this fortune I am going to ſettle in my native pariſh, where I reſolve to ſpend ſome hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

BETTY BROOM.

N° XXX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11.

THE deſires of a man increaſe with his acquiſitions; every ſtep which he advances brings ſomething within his view, which he did not ſee before, and which, as ſoon as he ſees it, he begins to want. Where neceſſity ends, curioſity begins, and no ſooner are we ſupplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we ſit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this reſtleſſneſs of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whoſe labour is exerted in producing ſuch petty conveniencies, that many ſhops are furniſhed with inſtruments, of which the uſe can hardly be found without enquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among neceſſary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours for another, that wants are ſupplied faſter than they can be formed, and the idle and luxurious find life ſtagnate for want of ſome deſire to keep it in motion. This ſpecies of diſtreſs furniſhes a new ſet of occupations; and multitudes are buſied, from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate ſomething to do.

It is very common to reproach thoſe artiſts as uſeleſs, who produce only ſuch ſuperfluities as neither accommodate the body nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occaſions of ſpending money, and conſuming time.

But this cenſure will be mitigated, when it is ſeriouſly conſidered, that money and time are the heavieſt burthens of life, and that the unhappieſt of all mortals are thoſe who have more of either than they know how to uſe. To ſet himſelf free from theſe incumbrances, one hurries to Newmarket; another travels over Europe; one pulls down his houſe and calls architects about him; another buys a ſeat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of ſhells; and another ſearches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is ſurely a public benefactor who finds employment for thoſe to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themſelves. It is true that this is ſeldom done merely from generoſity or compaſſion; almoſt every man ſeeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiouſneſs to conſider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than eſteemed; and miniſters of pleaſure will always be found, who ſtudy to make themſelves neceſſary, and to ſupplant thoſe who are practiſing the ſame arts.

One of the amuſements of idleneſs is reading without the fatigue of cloſe attention, and the world therefore ſwarms with writers whoſe wiſh is not to be ſtudied, but to be read.

No ſpecies of literary men has lately been ſo much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago, the nation was content with one Gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almoſt every large town has it's weekly hiſtorian, who regularly circulates

circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interest of Europe.

To write news in it's perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found. In Sir Henry Wotton's jocular definition, *an Ambassador* is said to be *a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country*; a News-writer is *a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit.* To these compositions is required neither genius not knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame and indifference to truth are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow: he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from Amsterdam or Dresden to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy: they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarce any thing awakes attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins; and if the scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war may be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relator of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

N° XXXI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18.

MANY moralists have remarked, that pride has of all human vices the widest dominion, appears in the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greatest variety of disguises; of disguises, which, like the moon's *veil of brightness*, are both *it's lustre and it's shade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourselves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of mischief; yet I know not whether idleness may not maintain a very doubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in it's full dignity, who call themselves the *Idle*, as Busiris in the play *calls himself the Proud*; who boast that they do nothing, and thank their stars that they have nothing to do; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again; who prolong the reign of darkness by double curtains, and never see the sun but to *tell him how they hate his beams*; whose whole labour is to vary the postures of indulgence, and whose day differs from the night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of Idleness, for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say, that they have ceased to breathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected; for, being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others; and is therefore not watched like fraud, which endangers property; or like pride, which naturally seeks it's gratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally

naturally endeavours to croud his mind with ſomething that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does any thing but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himſelf in his own favour.

Some are always in a ſtate of preparation, occupied in previous meaſures, forming plans, accumulating materials, and providing for the main affair. Theſe are certainly under the ſecret power of Idleneſs. Nothing is to be expected from the workman whoſe tools are for ever to be ſought. I was once told by a great maſter, that no man ever excelled in painting, who was eminently curious about pencils and colours.

There are others to whom Idleneſs dictates another expedient, by which life may be paſſed unprofitably away without the tediouſneſs of many vacant hours. The art is, to fill the day with petty buſineſs, to have always ſomething in hand which may raiſe curioſity, but not ſolicitude, and keep the mind in a ſtate of action, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practiſed by my old friend Sober with wonderful ſucceſs. Sober is a man of ſtrong deſires and quick imagination, ſo exactly balanced by the love of eaſe, that they can ſeldom ſtimulate him to any difficult undertaking: they have, however, ſo much power, that they will not ſuffer him to lie quite at reſt; and though they do not make him ſufficiently uſeful to others, they make him at leaſt weary of himſelf.

Mr. Sober's chief pleaſure is converſation; there is no end of his talk or his attention; to ſpeak or hear is equally pleaſing, for he ſtill fancies that he is teaching or learning ſomething, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he muſt go home, that his friends may ſleep; and another time in the morning, when all the world agrees to ſhut out interruption. Theſe are the moments which poor Sober trembles at the thought. But the miſery of theſe tireſome intervals he has many means of alleviating. He has perſuaded himſelf, that the manual arts are undeſervedly overlooked; he has obſerved in many trades the effects of cloſe thought, and juſt ratiocination. From ſpeculation he proceeded to practice, and ſupplied himſelf with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coal-box very ſucceſsfully, and which he ſtill continues to employ, as he finds occaſion.

He has attempted at other times the crafts of the ſhoe-maker, tin-man, plumber, and potter; in all theſe arts he has failed, and reſolves to qualify himſelf for them by better information. But his daily amuſement is chemiſtry. He has a ſmall furnace, which he employs in diſtillation, and which has long been the ſolace of his life. He draws oils and waters, and eſſences and ſpirits, which he knows to be of no uſe; ſits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that, whilſt a drop is falling, a moment flies away.

Poor Sober! I have often teazed him with reproof, and he has often promiſed reformation; for no man is ſo much open to conviction as the Idler, but there is none on whom it operates ſo little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace; but my hope is, that he will quit his trifles, and betake himſelf to rational and uſeful diligence.

N° XXXII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25.

AMONG the innumerable mortifications that way-lay human arrogance on every ſide, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the moſt common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more ſenſible by every attempt to ſupply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themſelves informed of the whole nature of things when they are ſhewn their form or told their uſe; but the ſpeculatiſt, who is not content with ſuperficial views, harraſſes himſelf with fruitleſs curioſity, and ſtill as he enquires more, perceives only that he knows leſs.

Sleep is a ſtate in which a great part of every life is paſſed. No animal has been yet diſcovered, whoſe exiſtence is not varied with intervals of inſenſibility; and

and ſome late philoſophers have extended the empire of Sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, ſo frequent, ſo great, ſo general, and ſo neceſſary, no ſearcher has yet found either the efficient or final cauſe; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irreſiſtible ſtupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate ſuſpenſion of it's active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this ſubject, Nature has taken ſufficient care that theory ſhall have little influence on practice. The moſt diligent enquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open; the moſt eager diſputant will begin about midnight to deſert his argument; and, once in four and twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the ſilent, the buſy and the idle, are all overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of ſleep.

Philoſophy has often attempted to repreſs inſolence, by aſſerting, that all conditions are levelled by death; a poſition which, however it may deject the happy, will ſeldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleaſing to conſider, that ſleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great diſtance, when the balm of reſt ſhall be effuſed alike upon every head, when the diverſities of life ſhall ſtop their operation, and the high and the low ſhall lie down together.

It is ſomewhere recorded of Alexander, that in the pride of conqueſts, and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himſelf to be a man by the neceſſity of ſleep. Whether he conſidered ſleep as neceſſary to his mind or body, it was indeed a ſufficient evidence of human infirmity; the body which required ſuch a frequency of renovation gave the faint promiſes of immortality; and the mind which, from time to time, ſunk gladly into inſenſibility, had made no very near approaches to the felicity of the ſupreme and ſelf-ſufficient Nature.

I know not what can tend more to repreſs all the paſſions that diſturb the peace of the world, than the conſideration that there is no height of happineſs or honour, from which man does not eagerly deſcend to a ſtate of unconſcious repoſe; that the beſt condition of life is ſuch, that we contentedly quit it's good to be diſentangled from it's evils; that in a few hous ſplendor fades before the eye, and praiſe itſelf deadens in the ear; the ſenſes withdraw from their objects, and reaſon favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and proſpects of covetouſneſs, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that deſires moſt have all his deſires gratified, he never ſhall attain a ſtate, which he can, for a day and a night, contemplate with ſatisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical ſeparations.

All envy would be extinguiſhed, if it were univerſally known that there are none to be envied, and ſurely none can be much envied who are not pleaſed with themſelves. There is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the diſtinctions of mankind have more ſhew than value, when it is found that all agree to be weary alike of pleaſures and of cares; that the powerful and the weak, the celebrated and obſcure, join in one common wiſh, and implore from Nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our deſire of abſtraction from ourſelves, that very few are ſatisfied with the quantity of ſtupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. Alexander himſelf added intemperance to ſleep, and ſolaced with the fumes of wine the ſovereignty of the world; and almoſt every man has ſome art, by which he ſteals his thoughts away from his preſent ſtate.

It is not much of life that is ſpent in cloſe attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are ſuffered to fly away without any traces left upon the intellects. We ſuffer phantoms to riſe up before us, and amuſe ourſelves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we diſmiſs for ever, and know not how we have been buſied.

Many have no happier moments than thoſe that they paſs in ſolitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which ſometimes put ſceptres in their hands or mitres on their heads, ſhifts the ſcene of pleaſure with endleſs variety, bids all the forms of beauty ſparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of viſionary luxury.

It is eaſy in theſe ſemi-ſlumbers to collect all the poſſibilities of happineſs, to alter the courſe of the ſun, to bring back the paſt, and anticipate the future, to

unite all the beauties of all ſeaſons, and all the bleſſings of all climates, to receive and beſtow felicity, and forget that miſery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary receſſion from the realities of life to airy fictions; and habitual ſubjection of reaſon to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuſe themſelves by a perpetual ſucceſſion of companions: but the difference is not great; in ſolitude we have our dreams to ourſelves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end ſought in both is forgetfulneſs of ourſelves.

N° XXXIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2.

[I hope the Author of the following letter will excuſe the omiſſion of ſome parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the Spectator has almoſt precluded the attempt of any future Writer.]

—— NON ITA ROMULI
PRÆSCRIPTUM, ET INTONSI CATONIS
AUSPICIIS VETERUMQUE NORMA. HOR.

SIR,

YOU have often ſolicited correſpondence. I have ſent you the *Journal* of a *ſenior Fellow*, or *genuine Idler*, juſt tranſmitted from Cambridge by a facetious correſpondent, and warranted to have been tranſcribed from the common-place book of the journaliſt.

Monday, Nine o'clock. Turned off my bed-maker for waking me at eight. Weather rainy. Conſulted my weather-glaſs. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, Ten. After breakfaſt, tranſcribed half a ſermon from Dr. Hickman. *N. B.* Never to tranſcribe any more from Calamy; Mrs. Pilcocks, at my curacy, having one volume of that author lying in the parlour window.

Ditto, Eleven. Went down into my cellar. *Mem.* My Mountain will be fit to drink in a month's time. *N. B.* To remove the five-year-old Port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, Twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glaſs again. Quickſilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand ſhakes.

Ditto, One. Dined alone in my room on a ſoal. *N. B.* The ſhrimp-ſauce not ſo good as Mr. H. of Peterhouſe and I uſed to eat in London laſt winter at the Mitre in Fleet Street. Sat down to a pint of Madeira. Mr. H. ſurprized me over it. We finiſhed two bottles of Port together, and were very chearful. *Mem.* To dine with Mr. H. at Peterhouſe next Wedneſday. One of the diſhes a leg of pork and peaſe, by my deſire.

Ditto, Six. News-paper in the Common-room.

Ditto, Seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall aſleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noiſy over my head.

Tueſday, Nine. Roſe ſqueamiſh. A fine morning. Weather-glaſs very high.

Ditto, Ten. Ordered my horſe, and rode to the five-mile ſtone on the Newmarket road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds, in full cry, croſſed the road, and ſtartled my horſe.

Ditto, Twelve. Dreſt. Found a letter on my table to be in London the 19th inſtant. Beſpoke a new wig.

Ditto, One. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the ſoup. Dr. Dry always orders the beef to be ſalted too much for me.

Ditto, Two. In the Common-room. Dr. Dry gave us an inſtance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his ſtomach by drinking old Madeira. Converſation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. Dry and myſelf played at back-gammon for a brace of ſnipes. Won.

Ditto, Five. At the coffee-houſe. Met Mr. H. there. Could not get a ſight of the Monitor.

Ditto, Seven. Returned home, and ſtirred my fire. Went to the Common-room, and ſupped on the ſnipes with Dr. Dry.

Ditto, Eight. Began the evening in the Common-room. Dr. Dry told ſeveral

ral ſtories. Were very merry. Our new fellow, that ſtudies phyſic, very talkative towards twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngeſt Miſs —— to drink tea with me ſoon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wedneſday, Nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ancle. Q. The gout? Fear I can't dine at Peterhouſe; but I hope a ride with ſet all to rights. Weather-glaſs below Fair.

Ditto, Ten. Mounted my horſe, though the weather ſuſpicious. Pain in my ancle entirely gone. Catched in a ſhower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glaſs is the beſt in Cambridge.

Ditto, Twelve. Dreſt. Sauntered up to the Fiſhmongers Hill. Met Mr. H. and went with him to Peterhouſe. Cook made us wait thirty-ſix minutes beyond the time. The company, ſome of my Emanuel friends. For dinner, a pair of ſoals, a leg of pork and peaſe, among other things. *Mem.* Peaſe-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and ſconced in my preſence.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ancle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Raillied for being no company. Mr. H.'s account of the accommodations on the road in his Bath journey.

Ditto, Six. Got into ſpirits. Never was more chatty. We ſat late at whiſt. Mr. H. and ſelf agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old houſe on the London road to-morrow.

Thurſday, Nine. My ſempſtreſs. She has loſt the meaſure of my wriſt. Forced to be meaſured again. The baggage has got a trick of ſmiling.

Ditto, Ten to Eleven. Made ſome rappee-ſnuff. Read the magazines. Received a preſent of pickles from Miſs Pilcocks. *Mem.* To ſend in return ſome collared eel, which I know both the old Lady and Miſs are fond of.

Ditto, Eleven. Glaſs very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. H. Horſe ſkittiſh and wants exerciſe. Arrive at the old houſe. All the proviſions beſpoke by ſome rakiſh fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a ſcheme to Newmarket. Could get nothing but mutton-chops off the worſt end. Port very new. Agree to try ſome other houſe to-morrow.

Here the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me, our genial Academic was waked with a ſevere fit of the gout; and, at preſent, enjoys all the dignity of that diſeaſe. But I believe we have loſt nothing by this interruption; ſince a continuation of the remainder of the journal, through the remainder of the week, would moſt probably have exhibited nothing more than a repeated relation of the ſame circumſtances of Idling and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded from this ſpecimen of Academic life, that I have attempted to decry our univerſities. If literature is not the eſſential requiſite of the modern academic, I am yet perſuaded, that Cambridge and Oxford, however degenerated, ſurpaſs the faſhionable Academies of our metropolis, and the Gymnaſia of foreign countries. The number of learned perſons in theſe celebrated ſeats is ſtill conſiderable, and more conveniences and opportunities for ſtudy ſtill ſubſiſt in them, than in any other place. There is at leaſt one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the *Genius of the place.* It is a ſport of inſpiring Deity, which every youth of quick ſenſibility and ingenuous diſpoſition creates to himſelf, by reflecting, that he is placed under thoſe venerable walls, where a Hooker and a Hammond, a Bacon and a Newton, once purſued the ſame courſe of ſcience, and from whence they ſoared to the moſt elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which Tully, according to his own teſtimony, experienced at Athens, when he contemplated the porticos where Socrates ſat, and the laurel-groves where Plato diſputed. But there are other circumſtances, and of the higheſt importance, which render our colleges ſuperior to all other places of education. Their inſtitutions, although ſomewhat fallen from their primæval ſimplicity, are ſuch as influence, in a particular manner, the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is no where more ſtrongly inculcated. The Academies, as they are preſumptuouſly ſtiled, are too low to be mentioned; and foreign ſeminaries are likely to prejudice the unwary mind with Calviniſm. But Engliſh univerſities render their ſtudents virtuous, at leaſt by excluding all opportunities of vice; and, by teaching them the principles of the Church of England, confirm them in thoſe of true Chriſtianity.

N° XXXIV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9.

TO illuſtrate one thing by it's reſemblance to another, has been always the moſt popular and efficacious art of inſtruction. There is indeed no other method of teaching that of which any one is ignorant, but by means of ſomething already known; and a mind ſo enlarged by contemplation and enquiry, that it has always many objects within it's view, will ſeldom be long without ſome near and familiar image through which an eaſy tranſition may be made to truths more diſtant and obſcure.

Of the parallels which have been drawn by wit and curioſity, ſome are literal and real, as between poetry and painting, two arts which purſue the ſame end, by the operation of the ſame mental faculties, and which differ only as the one repreſents things by marks permanent and natural, the other by ſigns accidental and arbitrary. The one therefore is more eaſily and generally underſtood, ſince ſimilitude of form is immediately perceived; the other is capable of conveying more ideas, for men have thought and ſpoken of many things which they do not ſee.

Other parallels are fortuitous and fanciful, yet theſe have ſometimes been extended to many particulars of reſemblance by a lucky concurrence of diligence and chance. The animal *body* is compoſed of many members, united under the direction of one mind; any number of individuals, connected for ſome common purpoſe, is therefore called a body. From this participation of the ſame appellation aroſe the compariſon of the *body* natural and *body* politick, of which, how far ſoever it has been deduced, no end has hitherto been found.

In theſe imaginary ſimilitudes, the ſame word is uſed at once in it's primitive and metaphorical ſenſe. Thus health, aſcribed to the body natural, is oppoſed to ſickneſs; but attributed to the body politick, ſtands as contrary to adverſity. Theſe parallels therefore have more of gen us, but leſs of truth; they often pleaſe, but they never convince.

Of this kind is a curious ſpeculation frequently indulged by a philoſopher of my acquaintance, who had diſcovered, that the qualities requiſite to converſation are very exactly repreſented by a bowl of punch.

'Punch,' ſays this profound inveſtigator, 'is a liquor compounded of ſpirit and acid juices, ſugar and water. The ſpirit, volatile and fiery, is the proper emblem of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very aptly figure pungency of raillery, and acrimony of cenſure; ſugar is the natural repreſentative of luſcious adulation and gentle complaiſance; and water is the proper hieroglyphick of eaſy prattle, innocent and taſteleſs.'

Spirit alone is too powerful for uſe. It will produce madneſs rather than merriment; and, inſtead of quenching thirſt, will inflame the blood. Thus wit, too copiouſly poured out, agitates the hearer with emotions rather violent than pleaſing; every one ſhrinks from the force of it's oppreſſion, the company ſits entranced and overpowered; all are aſtoniſhed, but nobody is pleaſed.

The acid juices give this genial liquor all it's power of ſtimulating the palate. Converſation would become dull and vapid, if negligence were not ſometimes rouſed, and ſluggiſhneſs quickened, by due ſeverity of reprehenſion. But acids unmixt will diſtort the face and torture the palate; and he that has no other qualities than penetration and aſperity, he whoſe conſtant employment is detection and cenſure, who looks only to find fault, and ſpeaks only to puniſh them, will ſoon be dreaded, hated, and avoided.

The taſte of ſugar is generally pleaſing, but it cannot long be eaten by itſelf. Thus meekneſs and courteſy will always recommend the firſt addreſs, but ſoon pall and nauſeate unleſs they are aſſociated with more ſprightly qualities. The chief uſe of ſugar is to temper the taſte of other ſubſtances, and ſoftneſs of behaviour in the ſame manner mitigates the roughneſs of contradiction, and allays the bitterneſs of unwelcome truth.

Water is the univerſal vehicle by which are conveyed the particles neceſſary to ſuſtenance and growth, by which thirſt is quenched, and all the wants of life

life and nature are ſupplied. Thus all the buſineſs of the world is tranſacted by artleſs and eaſy talk, neither ſublimed by fancy, nor diſcoloured by affectation, without either the harſhneſs of ſatire, or the luſciouſneſs of flattery. By this limpid vein of language curioſity is gratified, and all the knowledge is conveyed which one man is required to impart for the ſafety or convenience of another. Water is the only ingredient of punch which can be uſed alone, and with which man is content till fancy has framed an artificial want. Thus while we only deſire to have our ignorance informed, we are moſt delighted with the plaineſt diction; and it is only in the moments of idleneſs or pride, that we call for the gratifications of wit or flattery.

He only will pleaſe long, who, by tempering the acid of ſatire with the ſugar of civility, and allaying the heat of wit with the frigidity of humble chat, can make the true punch of converſation; and as that punch can be drunk in the greateſt quantity which has the largeſt proportion of water, ſo that companion will be ofteneſt welcome, whoſe talk flows out with inoffenſive copiouſneſs, and unenvied inſipidity.

I am, &c.

N° XXXV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

IF it be difficult to perſuade the Idle to be buſy, it is likewiſe, as experience has taught me, not eaſy to convince the buſy that it is better to be idle. When you ſhall deſpair of ſtimulating ſluggiſhneſs to motion, I hope you will turn your thoughts towards the means of ſtilling the buſtle of pernicious activity.

I am the unfortunate huſband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has ſomewhere heard, that a good houſewife *never* has any thing to *purchaſe when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth, and always in her head. She is not one of thoſe philoſophical talkers that ſpeculate without practice, and learn ſentences of wiſdom only to repeat them; ſhe is always making additions to her ſtores; ſhe never looks into a broker's ſhop, but ſhe ſpies ſomething that may be wanted ſome time; and it is impoſſible to make her paſs the door of a houſe where ſhe hears *Goods ſelling by auction*.

Whatever ſhe thinks cheap, ſhe holds it the duty of an œconomiſt to buy; in conſequence of this maxim, we are incumbered on every ſide with uſeleſs lumber. The ſervants can ſcarcely creep to their beds through the cheſts and boxes that ſurround them. The carpenter is employed once a week in building cloſets, fixing cupboards, and faſtening ſhelves; and my houſe has the appearance of a ſhip ſtored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often obſerved that advertiſements ſet her on fire; and therefore, pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbade the news-paper to be taken any longer; but my precaution is vain; I know not by what fatality, or by what confederacy, every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertiſement of a warehouſe newly opened is in her pocket-book, and ſhe knows before any of her neighbours when the ſtock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *ſold cheap for ready money*.

Such intelligence is to my dear-one the Syren's ſong. No engagement, no duty, no intereſt, can with-hold her from a ſale, from which ſhe always returns congratulating herſelf upon her dexterity at a bargain; the porter lays down his burden in the hall, ſhe diſplays her new acquiſitions, and ſpends the reſt of the day in contriving where they ſhall be put.

As ſhe cannot bear to have any thing uncomplete, one purchaſe neceſſitates another; ſhe has twenty feather-beds more than ſhe can uſe, and a late ſale has ſupplied her with a proportionable number of Whitney blankets, a large roll of linen for ſheets, and five quilts for every bed, which ſhe bought becauſe the ſeller told her, that if ſhe would clear his hands he would let her have a bargain.

Thus by hourly encroachments my habitation is made narrower and narrower;

rower; the dining-room is ſo crouded with tables, that dinner ſcarcely can be ſerved; the parlour is decorated with ſo many piles of china, that I dare not ſtep within the door; at every turn of the ſtairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that ſhelves may be ſet before them.

This, however, might be borne, if ſhe would gratify her own inclinations without oppoſing mine. But I who am idle am luxurious, and ſhe condemns me to live upon ſalt proviſion. She knows the loſs of buying in ſmall quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away becauſe it is ſpoiled; but ſhe perſiſts in her ſyſtem, and will never buy any thing by ſingle pennyworths.

The common vice of thoſe who are ſtill graſping at more, is to neglect that which they already poſſeſs; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef ſhould be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the ſecond bag of peaſe ſhould not be opened till the firſt are eaten; that every feather-bed ſhall be lain on in it's turn; that the carpets ſhould be taken out of the cheſts once a month and bruſhed, and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily enquiring after the beſt traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always ſcented by fumigations to deſtroy the moths. She employs workmen, from time to time, to adjuſt ſix clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that ruſt in the garret; and a woman in the next alley lives by ſcouring the braſs and pewter, which are only laid up to tarniſh again.

She is always imagining ſome diſtant time in which ſhe ſhall uſe whatever ſhe accumulates; ſhe has four looking-glaſſes which ſhe cannot hang up in her houſe, but which will be handſome in more lofty rooms; and pays rent for the place of a vaſt copper in ſome warehouſe, becauſe when we live in the country we ſhall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but know not how to change it: all the married men whom I conſult adviſe me to have patience; but ſome old batchelors are of opinion, that ſince ſhe loves ſales ſo well, ſhe ſhould have a ſale of her own; and I have, I think, reſolved to open her hoards, and advertiſe an auction. I am, Sir, your very humble ſervant,

PETER PLENTY.

N° XXXVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23.

THE great differences that diſturb the peace of mankind are not about ends, but means. We have all the ſame general deſires, but how thoſe deſires ſhall be accompliſhed will for ever be diſputed. The ultimate purpoſe of government is temporal, and that of religion is eternal happineſs. Hitherto we agree; but here we muſt part, to try, according to the endleſs varieties of paſſion and underſtanding combined with one another, every poſſible form of government, and every imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by Cumberland, that *rectitude*, applied to action or contemplation, is merely metaphorical; and that as a *right* line deſcribes the ſhorteſt paſſage from point to point, ſo a *right* action effects a good deſign by the few-eſt means; and ſo likewiſe a *right* opinion is that which connects diſtant truths by the ſhorteſt train of intermediate propoſitions.

To find the neareſt way from truth to truth, or from purpoſe to effect, not to uſe more inſtruments where fewer will be ſufficient, not to move by wheels and levers what will give way to the naked hand, is the great proof of a healthful and vigorous mind, neither feeble with helpleſs ignorance, nor overburdened with unwieldy knowledge.

But there are men who ſeem to think nothing ſo much the characteriſtic of a genius, as to do common things in an uncommon manner; like Hudibras, to *tell the clock by algebra*; or like the Lady in Dr. Young's Satires, *to drink tea by ſtratagem*: to quit the beaten track only becauſe it is known, and take a new path, however crooked or rough, becauſe the ſtraight was found out before.

Every man ſpeaks and writes with in-

tent

tent to be underſtood, and it can ſeldom happen but he that underſtands himſelf might convey his notions to another, if, content to be underſtood, he did not ſeek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his ſentiments may be received, not with moſt eaſe to his reader, but with moſt advantage to himſelf, he then transfers his conſideration from words to ſounds, from ſentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes leſs intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every ſpecies of authors whoſe labours counteract themſelves: the man of exuberance and copiouſneſs, who diffuſes every thought through ſo many diverſities of expreſſion, that it is loſt like water in a miſt; the ponderous dictator of ſentences, whoſe notions are delivered in the lump, and are, like uncoined bullion, of more weight than uſe; the liberal illuſtrator, who ſhews by examples and compariſons what was clearly ſeen when it was firſt propoſed; and the ſtately ſon of demonſtration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of ſtyle for which I know not that the maſters of oratory have yet found a name, a ſtyle by which the moſt evident truths are ſo obſcured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the moſt familiar propoſitions ſo diſguiſed that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence is the dreſs of ſenſe; but this is the maſk by which a true maſter of his art will ſo effectually conceal it, that a man will as eaſily miſtake his own poſitions, if he meets them thus transformed, as he may paſs in a maſquerade his neareſt acquaintance.

This ſtyle may be called the *terrifick*, for it's chief intention is to terrify and amaze; it may be termed the *repulſive*, for it's natural effect is to drive away the reader; or it may be diſtinguiſhed, in plain Engliſh, by the denomination of the *bugbear ſtyle*, for it has more terror than danger, and will appear leſs formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant that *two and two make four*; the child remembers the propoſition, and is able to count four to all the purpoſes of life, till the courſe of his education brings him among philoſophers, who fright him from his former knowledge, by telling him, that four is a certain aggregate of units; that all numbers being only the repetition of an unit, which, though not a number itſelf, is the parent, root, or original of all number, *four* is the denomination aſſigned to a certain number of ſuch repetitions. The only danger is, leſt, when he firſt hears theſe dreadful ſounds, the pupil ſhould run away; if he has but the courage to ſtay till the concluſion, he will find that, when ſpeculation has done it's worſt, two and two ſtill make four.

An illuſtrious example of this ſpecies of eloquence may be found in *Letters concerning the Mind*. The author begins by declaring, that *the ſorts of things are things that now are, have been, and ſhall be, and the things that ſtrictly* ARE. In this poſition, except the laſt clauſe, in which he uſes ſomething of the ſcholaſtick language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himſelf to know. But who would not believe that ſome wonderful novelty is preſented to his intellect, when he is afterwards told, in the true *bugbear* ſtyle, that *the* Ares, *in the former ſenſe, are things that lie between the* Have-beens *and* Shall-bes. *The* Have-beens *are things that are paſt; the* Shall-bes *are things that are to come; and the things that* ARE, in the latter ſenſe, *are things that have not been, nor ſhall be, nor ſtand in the midſt of ſuch as are before them or ſhall be after them. The things that have been, and ſhall be, have reſpect to preſent, paſt, and future. Thoſe likewiſe that now* ARE *have moreover place; that, for inſtance, which is here, that which is to the Eaſt, that which is to the Weſt.*

All this, my dear reader, is very ſtrange; but though it be ſtrange, it is not new, ſurvey theſe wonderful ſentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more than very plain truths, which till this author aroſe had always been delivered in plain language.

N° XXXVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30.

THOSE who are ſkilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only it's proper ore is copiouſly treaſured in the caverns of the earth, but that it's particles are diſperſed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the univerſe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greateſt plenty, which the condition of life makes of greateſt uſe; and that nothing is penuriouſly imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal diſtribution, or more eaſy acquiſition, would increaſe real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes ſo much to ſupply the wants of nature, that it's uſe conſtitutes much of the difference between ſavage and poliſhed life, between the ſtate of him that ſlumbers in European palaces, and him that ſhelters himſelf in the cavities of a rock from the chilneſs of the night, or the violence of the ſtorm. Gold can never be hardened into ſaws or axes; it can neither furniſh inſtruments of manufacture, utenſils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; it's only quality is to ſhine, and the value of it's luſtre ariſes from it's ſcarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, neceſſaries are as iron, and ſuperfluities as gold. What we really need, we may readily obtain; ſo readily, that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonneſs of abundance, confounded natural with artificial deſires, and invented neceſſities for the ſake of employment, becauſe the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is ſuſtained with ſo little labour, that the tediouſneſs of idle time cannot otherwiſe be ſupported.

Thus plenty is the original cauſe of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is ſo frequent and diſtreſsful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want neceſſaries, but cuſtom gives the name of poverty to the want of ſuperfluities.

When Socrates paſſed through ſhops of toys and ornaments, he cried out—'How many things are here which I 'do not need!' And the ſame exclamation may every man make who ſurveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dreſs food for the ſtomach is eaſy, the art is to irritate the palate when the ſtomach is ſufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and ſecurity require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the cielings. Such dreſs as may enable the body to endure the different ſeaſons, the moſt unenlightened nations have been able to procure; but the work of ſcience begins in the ambition of diſtinction, in variations of faſhion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with eaſy culture, the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits, and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, thoſe parts are moſt eaſy which are generally neceſſary. The intercourſe of ſociety is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticiſms, and refinements, are the work of thoſe whom idleneſs makes weary of themſelves. The commerce of the world is carried on by eaſy methods of computation. Subtilty and ſtudy are required only when queſtions are invented merely to puzzle, and calculations are extended to ſhew the ſkill of the calculator. The light of the ſun is equally beneficial to him whoſe eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whoſe reaſon perſuades him that it ſtands ſtill; and plants grow with the ſame luxuriance, whether we ſuppoſe earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raiſe our thoughts to nobler enquiries, we ſhall ſtill find facility concurring with uſefulneſs. No man needs ſtay to be virtuous till the moraliſts have determined the eſſence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by it's proximate conſequences, though the general and ultimate reaſon ſhould never be diſcovered. Religion may regulate the life of him to whom the Scotiſts and Thomiſts

miſts are alike unknown; and the aſſertors of fate and free-will, however different in their talk, agree to act in the ſame manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abſtruſer ſtudies. That curioſity which always ſucceeds eaſe and plenty was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our preſent ſtate is not able to fill, as a preparative for ſome better mode of exiſtence, which ſhall furniſh employment for the whole ſoul, and where pleaſure ſhall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time, let us gratefully acknowledge that goodneſs which grants us eaſe at a cheap rate, which changes the ſeaſons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the viciſſitudes of day and night to thoſe who never marked the tropicks, or numbered the conſtellations.

N° XXXVIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 6.

SINCE the publication of the letter concerning the condition of thoſe who are confined in gaols by their creditors, an enquiry is ſaid to have been made, by which it appears that more than * twenty thouſand are at this time priſoners for debt.

We often look with indifference on the ſucceſſive parts of that, which if the whole were ſeen together, would ſhake us with emotion. A debtor is dragged to priſon, pitied for a moment, and then forgotten; another follows him, and is loſt alike in the caverns of oblivion; but when the whole maſs of calamity riſes up at once, when twenty thouſand reaſonable beings are heard all groaning in unneceſſary miſery, not by the infirmity of nature, but the miſtake or negligence of policy, who can forbear to pity and lament, to wonder and abhor!

There is here no need of declamatory vehemence; we live in an age of commerce and computation; let us therefore coolly enquire what is the ſum of evil which the impriſonment of debtors brings upon our country.

It ſeems to be the opinion of the later computiſts, that the inhabitants of England do not exceed ſix millions, of which twenty thouſand is the three-hundredth part. What ſhall we ſay of the humanity or the wiſdom of a nation, that voluntarily ſacrifices one in every three hundred to lingering deſtruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not extend their influence to many; yet, if we conſider the effects of conſanguinity and friendſhip, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or neceſſary to another, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that every man languiſhing in priſon gives trouble of ſome kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of miſery we ſee diſtreſs extended to the hundredth part of the whole ſociety.

If we eſtimate at a ſhilling a day what is loſt by the inaction and conſumed in the ſupport of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleneſs, the publick loſs will riſe in one year to three hundred thouſand pounds; in ten years to more than a ſixth part of our circulating coin.

I am afraid that thoſe who are beſt acquainted with the ſtate of our priſons, will confeſs that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I ſuppoſe that the corroſion of reſentment, the heavineſs of ſorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exerciſe, and ſometimes of food, the contagion of diſeaſes, from which there is no retreat, and the ſeverity of tyrants, againſt whom there can be no reſiſtance, and all the complicated horrors of a priſon, put an end every year to the life of one in four of thoſe that are ſhut up from the common comforts of human life.

Thus periſh yearly five thouſand men, overborne with ſorrow, conſumed by famine, or putrified by filth; many of them in the moſt vigorous and uſeful

* This number was at that time confidently publiſhed; but the author has ſince found reaſon to queſtion the calculation.

part of life; for the thoughtleſs and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and buſy are ſeldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which ſuppoſes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be ſaid to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every Engliſh generation, an hundred and fifty thouſand periſh in our gaols! that in every century, a nation eminent for ſcience, ſtudious of commerce, ambitious of empire, ſhould willingly loſe, in noiſome dungeons, five hundred thouſand of it's inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been deſtroyed in the ſame time by the peſtilence and ſword!

A very late occurence may ſhew us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be uſeleſs; in the re-eſtabliſhment of the Trained Bands, twenty thouſand are conſidered as a force ſufficient againſt all exigences. While, therefore, we detain twenty thouſand in priſon, we ſhut up in darkneſs and uſeleſſneſs two thirds of an army which ourſelves judge equal to the defence of our country.

The monaſtick inſtitutions have been often blamed, as tending to retard the increaſe of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to thoſe whoſe employment is conſiſtent with abſtraction, and who, though ſolitary, will not be idle; to thoſe whom infirmity makes uſeleſs to the commonwealth, or to thoſe who have paid their due proportion to ſociety, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably diſmiſſed to live for themſelves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of theſe retreats, thoſe have no right to cenſure them whoſe priſons contain greater numbers than the monaſteries of other countries. It is, ſurely, leſs fooliſh and leſs criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happineſs, than condemn to certain and apparent miſery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedneſs.

The miſery of gaols is not half their evils: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedneſs can generate between them; with all the ſhameleſs and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of deſpair. In a priſon the awe of the publick eye is loſt, and the power of the law is ſpent; there are few fears, there are no bluſhes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himſelf as he can againſt his own ſenſibility, endeavours to practiſe on others the arts which are practiſed on himſelf, and gains the kindneſs of his aſſociates by ſimilitude of manners.

Thus ſome ſink amidſt their miſery, and others ſurvive only to propagate villainy. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of ſtarving and depraving one another: but, if there be any reaſon why this inveterate evil ſhould not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let thoſe, whoſe writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of ſuch impriſonment from the debtor to the creditor, till univerſal infamy ſhall purſue the wretch whoſe wantonneſs of power, or revenge of diſappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he ſhall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no ſhelter from contempt.

Surely, he whoſe debtor has periſhed in priſon, though he may acquit himſelf of deliberate murder, muſt at leaſt have his mind clouded with diſcontent, when he conſiders how much another has ſuffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her huſband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made ſo obdurate by avarice or cruelty as to revolve theſe conſequences without dread or pity, I muſt leave them to be awakened by ſome other power, for I write only to human beings.

N° XXXIX. SATURDAY, JANUARY 13.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

AS none look more diligently about them than those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I suppose it has not escaped your observation, that the Bracelet, or ornament of great antiquity, has been for some years revived among the English ladies.

The genius of our nation is said, I know not for what reason, to appear rather in improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earliest ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluster of jewels, and shewed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer, till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wrists, made their ornaments works of fancy and exercises of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increase of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myself that my life has happened at a time when those, on whom so much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as speak, and when respect takes possession of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have observed, that, even by the suffrages of their own sex, those ladies are accounted wisest, who do not yet disdain to be taught; and therefore I shall offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of Orpheus.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their husbands or children, or any other near relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reasonable to believe that she intends at least to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whose own ornaments must upbraid her with every failure, and who, by an open violation of her engagements, must for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the interest of the husband to solicit very earnestly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of small avail to hang it on the hand. A husband encircled with diamonds and rubies may gain some esteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himself most secure of his wife, should be fearful of persecuting her continually with his presence. The joy of life is variety; the tendereſt love requires to be rekindled by intervals of absence; and Fidelity herself will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the same man to the same picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dress. Marriage is rewarded with some honourable distinction which celibacy is forbidden to usurp. Some such information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enroll themselves in distinct classes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the Authoress may exhibit the Muses in a grove of laurel; the Housewife may shew Penelope with her web; the Votress of a single life may carry Ursula with her troop of virgins; the Gamester may have Fortune with her wheel; and those women that *have no character at all*, may display a Field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a set of ladies who have outlived most animal pleasures, and having nothing rational to put in their place, solace with cards the loss of what Time has taken away, and the want of what Wisdom, having never been courted, has never given. For these I know not how to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the Gamesters, for though they are always at play, they play for nothing, and never rise to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of skill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be supposed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet though they despair to please, they always wish to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this sisterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to please them than the King of Clubs, a personage very comely and majestick, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of some past or future party, and who may be displayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

But the bracelet which might be moſt eaſily introduced into general uſe is a ſmall convex mirror, in which the lady may ſee herſelf whenever ſhe ſhall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual ſource of delight. Other ornaments are of uſe only in publick, but this will furniſh gratifications to ſolitude. This will ſhew a face that muſt always pleaſe; ſhe who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual juſtification of the public voice; and ſhe who paſſes without notice may appeal from prejudice to her own eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet ſhould be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern ſoldiers are always diſtinguiſhed by ſplendour of dreſs, I ſhould rejoice to ſee the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have ſpent ſome thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no paſſion more heroic than love; and therefore I ſhould be glad to ſee the ſons of England marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But ſince in the army, as every where elſe, there will always be men who love nobody but themſelves, or whom no woman of honour will permit to love her, there is a neceſſity of ſome other diſtinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having loſt a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning ſhouted in his ear till it ſhould be recovered. For the ſame purpoſe I think the proſpect of Minorca might be properly worn on the hands of ſome of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themſelves with a view of Rochfort as it appeared to them at ſea: and thoſe that ſhall return from the conqueſt of America, may exhibit the warehouſe of Frontenac, with an inſcription denoting, that it was taken in leſs than three years by leſs than twenty thouſand men. I am, Sir, &c.

TOM TOY.

N° XL. SATURDAY, JANUARY 20.

THE practice of appending to the narratives of public tranſactions more minute and domeſtic intelligence, and filling the news-papers with advertiſements, has grown up by ſlow degrees to it's preſent ſtate.

Genius is ſhewn only by invention. The man who firſt took advantage of the general curioſity that was excited by a ſiege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the ſhop where the beſt puffs and powder were to be ſold, was undoubtedly a man of great ſagacity, and profound ſkill in the nature of man. But when he had once ſhewn the way it was eaſy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the publick of all that he deſires to buy or ſell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes cloaths, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is deſpiſed. Advertiſements are now ſo numerous that they are very negligently perused; and it is therefore become neceſſary to gain attention by magnificence of promiſes, and by eloquence ſometimes ſublime and ſometimes pathetic.

Promiſe, large promiſe, is the ſoul of an advertiſement. I remember a *Waſh-ball* that had a quality truly wonderful, it gave *an exquiſite edge to the razor*. And there are now to be ſold, *for ready money only*, ſome *Duvets for bed-coverings, of down, beyond compariſon ſuperior to what is called Otter Down*, and indeed ſuch, that it's *many excellencies cannot be here ſet forth*. With one excellence we are made acquainted, *It is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one*.

There are ſome, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modeſt ſincerity. The vender of the *Beautifying Fluid* tells a lot on that repels pimples, wiſhes away freckles, ſmooths the ſkin, and plumps the fleſh; and yet with a generous abhorrence of oſtentation, confeſſes, that it will not *reſtore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty*.

The true pathos of advertiſements muſt have ſunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal ſhewn by the ſeller of the Anodyne Necklace, for

for the eaſe and ſafety *of poor toothing infants*; and the affection with which he warned every mother, that *ſhe would never forgive herſelf* if her infant ſhould periſh without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the Camel and Dromedary, ſo many ſpecimens of the genuine ſublime, that there is now arrived another ſubject yet more worthy of his pen. *A famous Mohawk Indian Warrior, who took* Dieſkaw, *the French general priſoner, dreſſed in the ſame manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his ſcalping knife, Tom-ax, and all other implements of war: a ſight worthy the curioſity of every true Briton!* This is a very powerful deſcription; but a critic of great refinement would ſay that it conveys rather *horror* and *terror*. An Indian, dreſſed as he goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the ſcalping knife and tom-ax, there are many true Britons that will never be perſuaded to ſee him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the ſeverer judges, that the ſalutary ſorrow of tragick ſcenes is too ſoon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue; the ſame inconvenience ariſes from the improper diſpoſition of advertiſements. The nobleſt objects may be ſo aſſociated as to be made ridiculous. The Camel and Dromedary themſelves might have loſt much of their dignity between *the true Flower of Muſtard* and *the original Daffy's Elixir*; and I could not but feel ſome indignation when I found this illuſtrious Indian Warrior immediately ſucceeded by *a freſh parcel of Dublin butter*.

The trade of advertiſing is now ſo near to perfection, that it is not eaſy to propoſe any improvement. But as every art ought to be exerciſed in due ſubordination to the publick good, I cannot but propoſe it as a moral queſtion to theſe matters of the publick ear, Whether they do not ſometimes play too wantonly with our paſſions, as when the regiſter of lottery tickets invites us to his ſhop by an account of the prize which he ſold laſt year; and whether the advertiſing controvertiſts do not indulge aſperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the diſpute about *Straps for Razors*, now happily ſubſided, and in the altercation which at preſent ſubſiſts concerning *Eau de Luce*.

In an advertiſement it is allowed to every man to ſpeak well of himſelf, but I know not why he ſhould aſſume the privilege of cenſuring his neighbour. He may proclaim his own virtue or ſkill, but ought not to exclude others from the ſame pretenſions.

Every man that advertiſes his own excellence, ſhould write with ſome conſciouſneſs of a character which dares to call the attention of the publick. He ſhould remember that his name is to ſtand in the ſame paper with thoſe of the King of Pruſſia and the Emperor of Germany, and endeavour to make himſelf worthy of ſuch aſſociation.

Some regard is likewiſe to be paid to poſterity. There are men of diligence and curioſity who treaſure up the papers of the day merely becauſe others neglect them, and in time they will be ſcarce. When theſe collections ſhall be read in another century, how will numberleſs contractions be reconciled? and how ſhall fame be poſſibly diſtributed among the taylors and boddice-makers of the preſent age?

Surely theſe things deſerve conſideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my deſire that theſe abuſes may be rectified; but ſuch is the ſtate of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without ſufficient care or due qualifications.

N° XLI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 27.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not neceſſary to be imparted to the public; but I could not perſuade myſelf to ſuppreſs it, becauſe I think I know the ſentiments to be ſincere, and I feel no diſpoſition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

At tu quiſquis eris, miſeri qui cruda poetæ
Credideris fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc poſtrema tibi ſit fiendi cauſa, fluatque
Lenis inoffenſo vitaque morſque gradu.

MR. IDLER,

NOtwithſtanding the warnings of philoſophers; and the daily examples of loſſes and misfortunes which life forces upon our obſervation, ſuch is the abſorption of our thoughts in the buſineſs of the preſent day, ſuch the reſignation of our reaſon to empty hopes of future felicity, or ſuch our unwillingneſs to foreſee what we dread, that every calamity comes ſuddenly upon us, and not only preſſes us as a burden, but cruſhes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common courſe of nature, againſt which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flaſh of lightening intercepts the traveller in his way. The concuſſion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miſeries time brings, though ſilently yet viſibly, forward by it's even lapſe, which yet approach us unſeen, becauſe we turn our eyes away, and ſeize us unreſiſted, becauſe we could not arm ourſelves againſt them, but by ſetting them before us.

That it is vain to ſhrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourſelves which muſt ſome time be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the ſpeculative reaſoner, whoſe thoughts are always from home, whoſe eye wanders over life, whoſe fancy dances after meteors of happineſs kindled by itſelf, and who examines every thing rather than his own ſtate.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age muſt terminate in death; yet there is no man, ſays Tully, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the ſame principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend: but the fallacy will be in time detected; the laſt year, the laſt day, muſt come. It has come and is paſt. The life which made my own life pleaſant is at an end, and the gates of death are ſhut upon my proſpects.

The loſs of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wiſh and endeavour tended, is a ſtate of dreary deſolation in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itſelf, and finds nothing but emptineſs and horror. The blameleſs life, the artleſs tenderneſs, the pious ſimplicity, the modeſt reſignation, the patient ſickneſs, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loſs, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen ſorrow for what cannot be recalled.

Theſe are the calamities by which Providence gradually diſengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exerciſe reſolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languiſhment and grief.

Yet ſuch is the courſe of nature, that whoever lives long muſt outlive thoſe whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our preſent exiſtence, that life muſt one time loſe it's aſſociations, and every inhabitant of the earth muſt walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any intereſted witneſs of his misfortunes or ſucceſs.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the miſery of man? But what is ſucceſs to him that has none to enjoy it? Happineſs is not found in ſelf-contemplation; it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the ſtate of departed ſouls, becauſe ſuch knowledge is not neceſſary to a good life. Reaſon deſerts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence. Revelation is not wholly ſilent. *There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth*; and ſurely this joy is not incommunicable to ſouls diſentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let Hope therefore dictate, what Revelation does not confute, that the union of ſouls may ſtill remain; and that we who are ſtruggling with ſin, ſorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindneſs of thoſe who have finiſhed their courſe, and are now receiving their reward.

Theſe are the great occaſions which force the mind to take refuge in Religion: when we have no help in ourſelves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? And to what

what hope may we not raiſe our eyes and hearts, when we conſider that the Greateſt Power is the beſt?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not ſeek ſuccour in the Goſpel, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the univerſe make neceſſary, may ſilence but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may diſpoſe us to conceal our ſorrow, but cannot aſſuage it. Real alleviation of the loſs of friends, and rational tranquillity in the proſpect of our own diſſolution, can be received only from the promiſes of Him in whoſe hands are life and death, and from the aſſurance of another and better ſtate, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole ſoul ſhall be filled with joy. Philoſophy may infuſe ſtubborneſs, but Religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

N° XLII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3.

THE ſubject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the Rambler. The Spectator has alſo a letter containing a caſe not much different. I hope my correſpondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effuſion of the paſſions; and that ſhe hath rather attempted to paint ſome poſſible diſtreſs, than really feel the evils which ſhe has deſcribed.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

THERE is a cauſe of miſery, which though certainly known both to you and your predeceſſors, has been little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the ſnares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the Idler holds the ſhield for virtue, as well as the glaſs for folly, that he will employ his leiſure hours as much to his own ſatisfaction in warning his readers againſt a danger, as in laughing them out of a faſhion: for this reaſon I am tempted to aſk admittance for my ſtory in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honeſt wiſh of warning others to ſhun the track which I am afraid may lead me at laſt to ruin.

I am the chid of a father, who, having always lived in one ſpot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himſelf, thought no qualifications in the world deſirable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning neceſſary to happineſs but ſuch as might moſt effectually teach me to make the beſt market for myſelf. I was unfortunately born a beauty, to a full ſenſe of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to a ſchool in the country, afterwards tranſplanted me to another in town, at the inſtigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondneſs let me remain no longer than to learn juſt enough experience to convince me of the ſordidneſs of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my preſent ſituation will never ſuffer me to reach, and to teach me ſufficient morals to dare to deſpiſe what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the country, and lived with him and my mother in a ſmall village, within a few miles of the county-town; where I mixed, at firſt with reluctance, among company which, though I never deſpiſed, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations, and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to ſhew me every where, both at his own houſe, and at ſuch public diverſions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in London; told how much I was admired, and all his little ambition could ſuggeſt to ſet me in a ſtronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for ſale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a ſtate little better than that of proſtitution. I look on myſelf as growing cheaper every hour, and am loſing all that honeſt pride, that modeſt confidence, in which the

virgin

virgin dignity conſiſts. Nor does my misfortune ſtop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whoſe heart has ſet her above them; yet I am afraid the moſt charitable of them will hardly think it poſſible for me to be a daily ſpectatreſs of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at laſt conſenting to them, as the eye of the frighted infant is, by degrees, reconciled to the darkneſs of which at firſt it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himſelf muſt very well know, that vices, like diſeaſes, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poiſons the ſprings of life.

Yet this, though bad, is not the worſt: my father deceives himſelf in the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he ſuffers his houſe to be the ſeat of drunkenneſs, riot, and irreligion: who ſeduces, almoſt in my ſight, the menial ſervant, converſes with the proſtitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from the earlieſt dawn of reaſon was taught to think that at my approach every eye ſparkled with pleaſure, or was dejected as conſcious of ſuperior charms, am excluded from ſociety, through fear leſt I ſhould partake, if not of my father's crimes, at leaſt of his reproach. Is a parent, who is ſo little ſolicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at ſea without a ſtar to ſteer by, or an anchor to hold it faſt? Am I not to lay all my miſeries at thoſe doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at laſt one more to the number of thoſe wretches whom neither the world nor it's law befriends, may I not juſtly ſay that I have been awed by a parent into ruin? But though a parent's power is ſcreened from inſult and violation by the very words of Heaven, yet ſurely no laws, divine or human, forbid me to remove myſelf from the malignant ſhade of a plant that poiſons all around it, blaſts the bloom of youth, checks it's improvements, and makes all it's flowrets fade. But to whom can the wretched, can the dependant fly? For me to fly a father's houſe, is to be a beggar: I have only one comforter amidſt my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to Heaven for a witneſs to my juſt intentions, fly as a deſerted wretch to it's protection; and, being aſked who my Father is, point, like the ancient philoſopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and as your eſſays ſometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my ſtory there; and, if not for his own ſake, yet for mine, ſpare to perpetuate that worſt of calamities to me, the loſs of character, from which all his diſſimulation has not been able to reſcue himſelf. Tell the world, Sir, that it is poſſible for virtue to keep it's throne unſhaken without any other guard than itſelf; that it is poſſible to maintain that purity of thought ſo neceſſary to the completion of human excellence even in the midſt of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are aſſiſted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the inſertion of a ſtory like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

N° XLIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10.

THE natural advantages which ariſe from the poſition of the earth which we inhabit with reſpect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical ſpeculation, by which it has been diſcovered, that no other conformation of the ſyſtem could have given ſuch commodious diſtributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleaſure to ſo great a part of a revolving ſphere.

It may perhaps be obſerved by the moraliſt, with equal reaſon, that our globe ſeems particularly fitted for the reſidence of a being, placed here only for a ſhort time, whoſe taſk is to advance himſelf to a higher and happier ſtate of exiſtence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of man are ſuch as human nature does not willingly perform, and ſuch as thoſe are inclined to

delay

delay who yet intend ſome time to fulfil them. It was therefore neceſſary that this univerſal reluctance ſhould be counteracted, and the drowſineſs of heſitation wakened into reſolve; that the danger of procraſtination ſhould be always in view, and the fallacies of ſecurity be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conſpire. Whatever we ſee on every ſide, reminds us of the lapſe of time and the flux of life. The day and night ſucceed each other, the rotation of ſeaſons diverſifies the year, the ſun riſes, attains the meridian, declines and ſets; and the moon every night changes it's form.

The day has been conſidered as an image of the year, and the year as the repreſentation of life. The morning anſwers to the ſpring, and the ſpring to childhood and youth; the noon correſponds to the ſummer, and the ſummer to the ſtrength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with it's ſilence and darkneſs ſhews the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life ſhall ceaſe, with it's hopes and pleaſures.

He that is carried forward, however ſwiftly, by a motion equable and eaſy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus ſilently along, paſſed on through undiſtinguiſhable uniformity, we ſhould never mark it's approaches to the end of the courſe. If one hour were like another; if the paſſage of the ſun did not ſhew that the day is waſting; if the change of ſeaſons did not impreſs upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobſerved. If the parts of time were not variouſly coloured, we ſhould never diſcern their departure or ſucceſſion, but ſhould live thoughtleſs of the paſt, and careleſs of the future, without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already loſt with that which may properly remain.

But the courſe of time is ſo viſibly marked, that it is obſerved even by the birds of paſſage, and by nations who have raiſed their minds very little above animal inſtinct: there are human beings, whoſe language does not ſupply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for ſummer and winter.

Yet it is certain that theſe admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with ſuch accuracy the courſe of time, appear to have little ſenſibility of the decline of life. Every man has ſomething to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accuſtom ourſelves to conſider the effects of time, that things neceſſary and certain often ſurprize us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in our bloom, and, after an abſence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet thoſe whom we left children, and can ſcarcely perſuade ourſelves to treat them as men. The traveller viſits in age thoſe countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of buſineſs, wearied with unſatisfactory proſperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the laſt years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, ſo general and ſo miſchievous, let it be every man's ſtudy to exempt himſelf. Let him that deſires to ſee others happy, make haſte to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away ſomething from the value of his benefaction. And let him who purpoſes his own happineſs, reflect, that while he forms his purpoſe the day rolls on, and *the night cometh when no man can work.*

N° XLIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

MEMORY is among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the moſt frequent uſe, or rather that of which the agency is inceſſant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, with-

out which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination ſuppoſe ſomething already known, and draw their deciſions only from experience. Imagination ſelects ideas from the treaſures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of diſtant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is poſſible from what is paſt.

The two offices of Memory are collection and diſtribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for uſe. Collection is always the employment of our firſt years, and diſtribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and repoſite the various forms of things, is far the moſt pleaſing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we ſee is new. When firſt we enter into the world, whitherſoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleaſure at her ſide; every diverſity of nature pours ideas in upon the ſoul; neither ſearch nor labour are neceſſary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curioſity is gratified.

Much of the pleaſure which the firſt ſurvey of the world affords, is exhauſted before we are conſcious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with ſome other poſſible ſtate. We have therefore few traces of the joy of our earlieſt diſcoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had ſo many untaſted gratifications, that every excurſion gave delight which can now be found no longer, when the noiſe of a torrent, the ruſtle of a wood, the ſong of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and ſuſpend all perception of the courſe of time.

But theſe eaſy pleaſures are ſoon at an end; we have ſeen in a very little time ſo much, that we call out for new objects of obſervation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But ſtudy is laborious, and not always ſatisfactory; and converſation has it's pains as well as pleaſures; we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupillage men commonly ſet themſelves free about the middle of life, by ſhutting up the avenues of intelligence, and reſolving to reſt in their preſent ſtate; and they, whoſe ardour of enquiry continues longer, find themſelves inſenſibly forſaken by their inſtructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between thoſe that are younger, and that are older than himſelf, is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century, finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from thoſe that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of Memory are opened, and the ſtores of accumulated knowledge are diſplayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honeſt commerce of mutual intereſt. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intenſe meditation without neceſſity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, ſeldom endeavours after further acquiſitions.

The pleaſure of recollecting ſpeculative notions would not be much leſs than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the paſſages of life; but ſuch is the neceſſary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleaſure recurs but aſſociated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when ſomething was enjoyed that is now loſt, when ſome hope was not yet blaſted, when ſome purpoſe had not yet languiſhed into ſluggiſhneſs or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event juſt the ſame, that evil makes deeper impreſſion than good, it is certain that few can review the time paſt without heavineſs of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities loſt by negligence. The ſhades of the dead riſe up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amuſements, the aſſiſtants of his labours, whom the hand of death has ſnatched away.

When an offer was made to Themiſtocles of teaching him the art of Memory, he anſwered, that he would rather wiſh for the art of Forgetfulneſs. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of miſery which he was unable

able to ſuppreſs, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with ſome *oblivious antidote*. In this we all reſemble one another; the hero and the ſage are, like vulgar mortals, overburthened by the weight of life, all ſhrink from recollection, and all wiſh for an art of forgetfulneſs.

N° XLV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

THERE is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the diſadvantage of themſelves; a deſire to be praiſed for ſuperior acuteneſs, diſcovered only in the degradation of their ſpecies, or cenſure of their country.

Defamation is ſufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind may find long exerciſe for his zeal or wit in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is eaſier than diſcernment; and moſt of theſe writers ſpare themſelves the labour of enquiry, and exhauſt their virulence upon imaginary crimes, which, as they never exiſted, can never be amended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the Engliſh for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national ſelfiſhneſs. 'Tis vain,' ſays the ſatyriſt, 'to ſet before any 'Engliſhman the ſcenes of landſcape, 'or the heroes of hiſtory; nature and 'antiquity are nothing in his eye; he 'has no value but for himſelf, nor de-'ſires any copy but of his own form.'

Whoever is delighted with his own picture muſt derive his pleaſure from the pleaſure of another. Every man is always preſent to himſelf, and has, therefore, little need of his own reſemblance, nor can deſire it, but for the ſake of thoſe whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to be remembered. This uſe of the art is a natural and reaſonable conſequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even ſuch pride is more laudable, than that by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue not excite it.

Genius is chiefly exerted in hiſtorical pictures, and the art of the painter of portraits is often loſt in the obſcurity of his ſubject. But it is in painting as in life; what is greateſt is not always beſt. I ſhould grieve to ſee Reynolds transfer to heroes and to goddeſſes, to empty ſplendor and to airy fiction, that art which is now employed in diffuſing friendſhip, in reviving tenderneſs, in quickening the affections of the abſent, and continuing the preſence of the dead.

Yet in a nation great and opulent there is room, and ought to be patronage, for an art like that of painting through all it's diverſities; and it is to be wiſhed, that the reward now offered for an hiſtorical picture may excite an honeſt emulation, and give beginning to an Engliſh ſchool.

It is not very eaſy to find an action or event that can be efficaciouſly repreſented by a painter.

He muſt have an action not ſucceſſive but inſtantaneous; for the time of a picture is a ſingle moment. For this reaſon, the death of Hercules cannot well be painted, though at the firſt view it flatters the imagination with very glitterring ideas: the gloomy mountain, over-hanging the ſea, and covered with trees, ſome bending to the wind, and ſome torn from their roots by the raging hero; the violence with which he rends from his ſhoulders the envenomed garment; the propriety with which his muſcular nakedneſs may be diſplayed; the death of Lycas whirled from the promontory; the gigantic preſence of Philoctetes; the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the ſky.

All theſe images fill the mind, but will not compoſe a picture, becauſe they cannot be united in a ſingle moment. Hercules muſt have rent his fleſh at one time, and toſſed Lycas into the air at another; he muſt firſt tear up the trees, and then lie down upon the pile.

The action muſt be circumſtantial and diſtinct. There is a paſſage in the Iliad which cannot be read without ſtrong emotions. A Trojan prince, ſeized by Achilles in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms ſupplicates for life. 'How can a wretch like 'thee,' ſays the haughty Greek, 'en-'treat to live, when thou knoweſt that 'the time muſt come when Achilles is

' to die?' This cannot be painted, becauſe no peculiarity of attitude or diſpoſition can ſo ſupply the place of language as to impreſs the ſentiment.

The event painted muſt be ſuch as excites paſſion, and different paſſions in the ſeveral actors, or a tumult of contending paſſions in the chief.

Perhaps the diſcovery of Ulyſſes by his nurſe is of this kind. The ſurprize of the nurſe mingled with joy; that of Ulyſſes checked by prudence, and clouded by ſolicitude; and the diſtinctneſs of the action by which the ſcar is found; all concur to complete the ſubject. But the pictures, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler aſſemblage may be furniſhed by the death of Epaminondas. The mixture of gladneſs and grief in the face of the meſſenger who brings his dying general an account of the victory; the various paſſions of the attendants; the ſublimity of compoſure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his ſide, and the faint gleam of ſatisfaction that diffuſes itſelf over the languor of death; are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wiſh to ſee employed upon them.

If the deſign were not too multifarious and extenſive, I ſhould wiſh that our painters would attempt the diſſolution of the parliament by Cromwell. The point of time may be choſen when Cromwell, looking round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and Harriſon laid hands on the ſpeaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances, which rage, and terror, and aſtoniſhment, and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of that hateful aſſembly, of whom the principal perſons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irreſolute repugnance of ſome, the hypocritical ſubmiſſions of others, the ferocious inſolence of Cromwell, the rugged brutality of Harriſon, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedneſs, would, if ſome proper diſpoſition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irreſiſtible inſtruction.

N° XLVI. SATURDAY, MARCH 3.

MR. IDLER,

I Am encouraged, by the notice you have taken of Betty Broom, to repreſent the miſeries which I ſuffer from a ſpecies of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have eſcaped the obſervation of thoſe who converſe little with fine ladies, or ſee them only in their publick characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, becauſe if I do not complain to you, I muſt burſt in ſilence; for my miſtreſs has teazed me and teazed me till I can hold no longer, and yet I muſt not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in common ſervices can quarrel, and give warning, and find other places; but we that live with great ladies, if we once offend them, have nothing left but to return into the country.

I am waiting maid to a lady who keeps the beſt company, and is ſeen at every place of faſhionable reſort. I am envied by all the maids in the ſquare, for few counteſſes leave off ſo many cloaths as my miſtreſs, and nobody ſhares with me; ſo that I ſupply two families in the country with finery for the aſſizes and horſe-races, beſides what I wear myſelf. The ſteward and houſekeeper have joined againſt me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their deſigns are found out by my lady, who ſays I need not fear them, for ſhe will never have Dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. Idler, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for ſhe loves a ſharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you ſuſpect that ſhe has any thing to hint which ſhe is aſhamed to ſpeak at length, for none can have greater purity of ſentiment or rectitude of intention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will ſhe tell. She always gives her directions obliquely and alluſively, by the mention of ſomething relative or conſequential, without any other purpoſe than to exerciſe my acuteneſs and her own.

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It is impoſſible to give a notion of this ſtyle otherwiſe than by examples. One night, when ſhe had ſet writing letters till it was time to be dreſſed—'Molly,' ſaid ſhe, 'the ladies are all 'to be at court to-night in white 'aprons.' When ſhe means that I ſhould ſend to order the chair, ſhe ſays—'I 'think the ſtreets are clean, I may ven-'ture to walk.' When ſhe would have ſomething put into it's place, ſhe bids me *lay it on the floor*. If ſhe would have me ſnuff the candles, ſhe aſks *whether I think her eyes are like a cat's?* If ſhe thinks her chocolate delayed, ſhe talks of *the benefit of abſtinence*. If any needle-work is forgotten, ſhe ſuppoſes *that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger*.

She always imagines that I can recall every thing paſt from a ſingle word. If ſhe wants her head from the milliner, ſhe only ſays—'Molly, you know Mrs. 'Tape's.' If ſhe would have the mantua-maker ſent for, ſhe remarks *that Mr. Taffety, the mercer, was here laſt week*. She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the firſt time ſhe was abroad all day I ſhould chuſe her a new ſet of coffee-cups at the china-ſhop: of this ſhe reminded me yeſterday, as ſhe was going down ſtairs, by ſaying,—'You can't 'find your way now to Pall-Mall.'

All this would never vex me, if, by encreaſing my trouble, ſhe ſpared her own; but, dear Mr. Idler, is it not as eaſy to ſay *coffee-cups* as *Pall-Mall*, and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of underſtanding them?

When firſt I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for ſhe has many books, and I have much time to read, ſo that of late I ſeldom have miſſed her meaning: but when ſhe firſt took me, I was an ignorant girl; and ſhe, who, as is very common, confounded want of knowledge with want of underſtanding, began once to deſpair of bringing me to any thing, becauſe, when I came into her chamber at the call of her bell, ſhe aſked me, *Whether we lived in Zembla*, and I did not gueſs the meaning of her enquiry; but modeſtly anſwered, that *I could not tell*. She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country, where ſounds are ſaid to be congealed by the froſt.

Another time, as I was dreſſing her head, ſhe began to talk on a ſudden of *Meduſa*, and *Snakes*, and *men turned into ſtone*, and *maids, that if they were not watched, would let their miſtreſſes be Gorgons*. I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at laſt, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, ſhe bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling irons.

It is not without ſome indignation, Mr. Idler, that I diſcover, in theſe artifices of vexation, ſomething worſe than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in ſuperiority, which knows itſelf in no danger of reproof or oppoſition; a cruel pleaſure in ſeeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is ſtudiouſly concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence, in the ſharp cenſure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable, failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning, I can perceive a ſudden cloud of diſappointment ſpread over her face, and have ſometimes been afraid leſt I ſhould loſe her favour by underſtanding her when ſhe means to puzzle me.

This day, however, ſhe has conquered my ſagacity. When ſhe went out of her dreſſing-room, ſhe ſaid nothing, but, *Molly, you know*, and haſtened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a ſecret; but if I do not know, before ſhe comes back, what I yet have no means of diſcovering, ſhe will make my dullneſs a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties neceſſary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the houſekeeper. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

MOLLY QUICK.

N° XLVII. SATURDAY, MARCH 10.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

I Am the unfortunate wife of a City Wit, and cannot but think that my caſe may deſerve equal compaſſion with any of thoſe which have been repreſented in your paper.

I married my huſband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeſhip; we put our money together, and furniſhed a large and ſplendid ſhop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curioſity or kindneſs commonly beſtows on beginners, was continued by confidence and eſteem; one cuſtomer, pleaſed with his treatment and his bargain, recommended another, and we were buſy behind the counter from morning to night.

Thus every day encreaſed our wealth and our reputation. My huſband was often invited to dinner openly on the Exchange by hundred thouſand pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courteſies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all conſiderable payments by draughts upon our banker.

You will eaſily believe that I was well enough pleaſed with my condition; for what happineſs can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny, that, imagining myſelf likely to be in a ſhort time the ſheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with ſome of my neighbours, and adviſed my huſband to keep good company, and not to be ſeen with men that were worth nothing.

In time he found that ale diſagreed with his conſtitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a ſet of criticks, who diſputed upon the merit of the different theatrical performers. By theſe idle fellows he was taken to the play, which at firſt he did not ſeem much to heed; for he owned that he very ſeldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his laſt bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went again and again, though I often told him that three ſhillings were thrown away; at laſt he grew uneaſy if he miſſed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called Macbeth; and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to ſee men and women make themſelves ſuch fools, by pretending to be witches and ghoſts, generals and kings, and to walk in their ſleep when they were as much awake as thoſe that looked at them. He told me that I muſt get higher notions, and that a play was the moſt rational of all entertainments, and moſt proper to relax the mind after the buſineſs of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of ſome of the players; and, when the play was over, very frequently treated them with ſuppers, for which he was admitted to ſtand behind the ſcenes.

He ſoon began to loſe ſome of his morning hours in the ſame folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearſals; but of this ſpecies of idleneſs he grew weary, and ſaid, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diverſion of the evening increaſed; he bought a ſword, and paid five ſhillings a night to ſit in the boxes; he went ſometimes into a place which he calls the Green-room, where all the wits of the age aſſemble; and when he had been there, could do nothing, for two or three days, but repeat their jeſts, or tell their diſputes.

He has now loſt his regard for every thing but the play-houſe; he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His firſt care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be repreſented, walks about the ſhop, repeating them ſo loud, and with ſuch ſtrange geſtures, that the paſſengers gather round the door.

His greateſt pleaſure, when I married him, was to hear the ſituation of his ſhop commended, and to be told how many eſtates have been got in it by the ſame trade; but of late he grows peeviſh at any mention of buſineſs, and delights

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in nothing ſo much as to be told that he ſpeaks like Moſſop.

Among his new aſſociates, he has learned another language, and ſpeaks in ſuch a ſtrain, that his neighbours cannot underſtand him. If a cuſtomer talks longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excruciated with unmeaning verboſity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameneſs of expreſſion, and often declares himſelf weary of attending to the minutiæ of a ſhop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is ſcarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragick poetry, he has locked himſelf in an upper room ſix or ſeven hours a day, and when I carry him any paper to be read or ſigned, I hear him talking vehemently to himſelf, ſometimes of love and beauty, ſometimes of friendſhip and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. Idler, be informed what to think of a ſhopkeeper, who is inceſſantly talking about liberty; a word, which, ſince his acquaintance with polite life, my huſband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occaſions, afraid of our liberty, and delares his reſolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am ſure he has liberty enough; it were better for him and me if his liberty was leſſened.

He has a friend whom he calls a Critick, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critick tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that ſome detached ſcenes will ſhine prodigiouſly, and that in the character of Bombulus he is wonderfully great. My ſcribbler then ſqueezes his hand, calls him the beſt of friends, thanks him for his ſincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reaſon to believe that he ſeldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this courſe of life our credit as traders is leſſened; and I cannot forbear to ſuſpect, that my huſband's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he ſeems to be always the loweſt of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the reſt have ſpoken. When he was behind his counter, he uſed to be briſk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing, and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and criticks he is timorous and aukward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. Idler, perſuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him that wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, Sir, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

N° XLVIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 17.

THERE is no kind of idleneſs, by which we are ſo eaſily ſeduced, as that which dignifies itſelf by the appearance of buſineſs, and by making the loiterer imagine that he has ſomething to do which muſt not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual agitation, and hurries him rapidly from place to place.

He that ſits ſtill, or repoſes himſelf upon a couch, no more deceives himſelf than he deceives others; he knows that he is doing nothing, and has no other ſolace of his inſignificance than the reſolution, which the lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing, every man is aſhamed; and to do much, almoſt every man is unwilling or afraid. Innumerable expedients have therefore been invented to produce motion without labour, and employment without ſolicitude. The greater part of thoſe whom the kindneſs of Fortune has left to their own direction, and whom Want does not keep chained to the counter or the plow, play throughout life with the ſhadows of buſineſs, and know not at laſt what they have been doing.

Theſe imitators of action are of all denominations. Some are ſeen at every auction without intention to purchaſe; others appear punctually at the Exchange, though they are known there only by their faces. Some are always making parties, to viſit collections for which they have no taſte, and ſome neg-

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ect every pleaſure and every duty to hear queſtions, in which they have no intereſt, debated in parliament.

Theſe men never appear more ridiculous, than in the diſtreſs which they imagine themſelves to feel, from ſome accidental interruption of thoſe empty purſuits. A tiger newly impriſoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than Jack-Tulip with-held from a floriſt's feaſt, or Tom Diſtich hindered from ſeeing the firſt repreſentation of a play.

As poetical affairs are the higheſt and moſt extenſive of temporal concerns, the mimick of a politican is more buſy and important than any other trifler. Monſieur le Noir, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the preſent confuſion of the world, declared himſelf a ſteady adherent to the French, is made miſerable by a wind that keeps back the packet-boat, and ſtill more miſerable by every account of a Malouin privateer caught in his cruize: he knows well that nothing can be done or ſaid by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can neither haſten nor retard good or evil, that his joys or ſorrows have ſcarcely any partakers; yet ſuch is his zeal, and ſuch his curioſity, that he would run barefooted to Graveſend, for the ſake of knowing firſt that the Engliſh had loſt a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the Continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confeſſed to be deſirable, and there are ſome who fancy themſelves always buſy in acquiring it. Of theſe ambulatory ſtudents, one of the moſt buſy is my friend Tom Reſtleſs.

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to ſpend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deſerve the labour of peruſal, that they give the mind an unfaſhionable caſt, and deſtroy that freedom of thought and eaſineſs of manners indiſpenſably requiſite to acceptance in the world. Tom has therefore found another way to wiſdom. When he riſes he goes into a coffee-houſe, where he creeps ſo near to men whom he takes to be reaſoners as to hear their diſcourſe, and endeavours to remember ſomething which, when it has been ſtrained through Tom's head, is ſo near to nothing, that what it once was cannot be diſcovered. This he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of viſits, till hearing what he ſays upon th queſtion, he becomes able at dinner to ſay a little himſelf; and as every great genius relaxes himſelf among his inferiors, meets with ſome who wonder how ſo young a man can talk ſo wiſely.

At night he has a new feaſt prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a diſputing ſociety, or a ſpeaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half underſtand; goes home pleaſed with the conſciouſneſs of a day well ſpent, lies down full of ideas, and riſes in the morning empty as before.

N° XLIX. SATURDAY, MARCH 24.

I Supped three nights ago with my friend Will Marvel. His affairs obliged him lately to take a journey into Devonſhire, from which he has juſt returned. He knows me to be a very patient hearer, and was glad of my company, as it gave him an opportunity of diſburthening himſelf by a minute relation of the caſualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of thoſe who go out and return with nothing to tell. He has a ſtory of his travels, which will ſtrike a home-bred citizen with horror, and has in ten days ſuffered ſo often the extremes of terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he ſhall ever again expoſe either his body or his mind to ſuch danger and fatigue.

When he left London the morning was bright, and a fair day was promiſed. But Will is born to ſtruggle with difficulties. That happened to him, which has ſometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Before he had going more than ten miles, it began to rain. What courſe was to be taken! His ſoul diſdained to turn back. He did what the King of Pruſſia might have done; he flapped his hat, buttoned up his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mind by the ſtoical conſolation, that whatever is violent will be ſhort.

His conſtancy was not long tried; at the diſtance of about half a mile he ſaw an inn, which he entered wet and weary, and found civil treatment and proper refreſhment. After a reſpite of about two hours he looked abroad, and ſeeing the ſky clear, called for his horſe, and paſſed the firſt ſtage without any other memorable accident.

Will conſidered that labour muſt be relieved by pleaſure, and that the ſtrength which great undertakings require muſt be maintained by copious nutriment; he therefore ordered himſelf an elegant ſupper, drank two bottles of claret, and paſſed the beginning of the night in ſound ſleep; but waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a ſhower beating againſt his windows with ſuch violence as to threaten the diſſolution of nature. When he aroſe, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himſelf, however, to a company that was travelling the ſame way, and came ſafely to the place of dinner, though every ſtep of his horſe daſhed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he ſet forward alone, and paſſed many collections of water of which it was impoſſible to gueſs the depth, and which he now cannot review without ſome cenſure of his own raſhneſs; but what a man undertakes he muſt perform, and Marvel hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds, think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute ſenſations as themſelves. My friend was now to lodge the ſecond night almoſt fifty miles from home, in a houſe which he never had ſeen before, among people to whom he was totally a ſtranger, not knowing whether the next man he ſhould meet would prove good or bad; but ſeeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode reſolutely into the yard; and knowing that reſpect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunction to the hoſtler with ſpirit, and, entering the houſe, called vigorouſly about him.

On the third day up roſe the ſun and Mr. Marvel. His troubles and his dangers were now ſuch as he wiſhes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were leſs frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a ſingle ſoul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and ſeeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obſcured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for ſome time ſuffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wiſhed himſelf again ſafe at home. One comfort he had, which was to conſider that none of his friends were in the ſame diſtreſs, for whom, if they had been with him, he ſhould have ſuffered more than for himſelf; he could not forbear ſometimes to conſider how happily the Idler is ſettled in an eaſier condition, who, ſurrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Amidſt theſe reflections he came to a town and found a dinner, which diſpoſed him to more chearful ſentiments: but the joys of life are ſhort, and it's miſeries are long; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and deſolation.

At laſt the ſun ſet, and all the horrors of darkneſs came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence in which he had gratified himſelf at noon with too long an interval of reſt; yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer ſee, ſometimes ruſhing ſuddenly into water, and ſometimes incumbered with ſtiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next ſtep might not be the laſt.

In this diſmal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horſe unexpectedly ſtood ſtill. Marvel had heard many relations of the inſtinct of horſes, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river ſtill and deep, and ſometimes that a dead body lay acroſs the track. He ſat ſtill awhile to recollect his thoughts; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkneſs, out ſtepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in ſafety, and ſlept in quiet.

The reſt of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and deſcended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look; he paſſed marſhes like the Serbonian *bog, where armies whole have ſunk*; he forded rivers where the current roared like the Egre of the Se-

vern; or ventured himſelf on bridges that trembled under him; from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abyſſes; he wandered over houſeleſs heaths amidſt all the rages of the elements, with the ſnow driving in his face, and the tempeſt howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which Marvel paints his adventures. He has accuſtomed himſelf to ſounding words and hyperbolical images, till he has loſt the power of true deſcription. In a road through which the heavieſt carriages paſs without difficulty, and the poſt-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardſhips like thoſe which are endured in Siberian deſarts, and miſſes nothing of romantic danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful ſtory is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common viciſſitudes of rain and ſunſhine.

N° L. SATURDAY, MARCH 31.

THE character of Mr. Marvel has raiſed the merriment of ſome and the contempt of others who do not ſufficiently conſider how often they hear and practiſe the ſame arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that ſwarm upon the earth, a ſingle man who does not believe that he has ſomething extraordinary to relate of himſelf; and who does not at one time or other, ſummon the attention of his friends to the caſualties of his adventures and the viciſſitudes of his fortune; caſualties and viciſſitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diverſified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a deſk; to the ſailor who reſigns himſelf to the wind and water, and the farmer whoſe longeſt journey is to the market.

In the preſent ſtate of the world man may paſs through Shakeſpeare's ſeven ſtages of life, and meet nothing ſingular or wonderful. But ſuch is every man's attention to himſelf, that what is common and unheeded when it is only ſeen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the uſual proceſs of nature, that men ſhould ſicken and recover, that ſome deſigns ſhould ſucceed and others miſcarry, that friends ſhould be ſeparated and meet again, that ſome ſhould be made angry by endeavours to pleaſe them, and ſome be pleaſed when no care has been uſed to gain their approbation; that men and women ſhould at firſt come together by chance, like each other ſo well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondneſs, increaſe or extinguiſh fondneſs by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, ſome of whome die before their parents, and others ſurvive them.

Yet let any man tell his own ſtory, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; ſomething has always diſcriminated his caſe; ſome unuſual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miſerable than other mortals; for in pleaſures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without ſome artificial augmentations, many of the pleaſures of life, and almoſt all it's embelliſhments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to expreſs more delight than he felt, thoſe who felt moſt would raiſe little envy. If travellers were to deſcribe the moſt laboured performances of art with the ſame coldneſs as they ſurvey them, all expectations of happineſs from change of place would ceaſe. The pictures of Raphael would hang without ſpectators, and the gardens of Verſailles might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleaſure that is received ends in an opportunity of ſplendid falſehood, in the power of gaining notice by the diſplay of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a hiſtory of happy moments, of which, in reality, the moſt happy was the laſt.

The ambition of ſuperior ſenſibility and ſuperior eloquence diſpoſes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at one time, and communicate it at another; and each labours firſt to impoſe upon himſelf, and then to propagate the impoſture.

Pain is leſs ſubject than pleaſure to capriees of expreſſion. The torments of diſeaſe,

diſeaſe, and the grief of irremediable misfortunes, ſometimes are ſuch as no words can declare, and can only be ſignified by groans, or ſobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleaſure, becauſe he never has pleaſure but in ſuch degrees as the ordinary uſe of language may equal or ſurpaſs.

It is nevertheleſs certain, that many pains as well as pleaſures are heightened by rhetorical affectation, and that the picture is, for the moſt part, bigger than the life.

When we deſcribe our ſenſations of another's ſorrows, either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the cuſtoms of the world ſcarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondeſt friendſhip would enrage oftener than comfort, were the tongue on ſuch occaſions faithfully to repreſent the ſentiments of the heart; and I think the ſtricteſt moraliſts allow forms of addreſs to be uſed without much regard to their literal acceptation, when either reſpect or tenderneſs requires them, becauſe they are univerſally known to denote not the degree but the ſpecies of our ſentiments.

But the ſame indulgence cannot be allowed to him who aggravates dangers incurred or ſorrow endured by himſelf, becauſe he darkens the proſpect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of our condition by uſeleſs terror. Thoſe who magnify their delights are leſs criminal deceivers, yet they raiſe hopes which are ſure to be diſappointed. It would be undoubtedly beſt, if we could ſee and hear every thing as it is, that nothing might be too anxiouſly dreaded, or too ardently purſued.

N° LI. SATURDAY, APRIL 7.

IT has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are leaſt eminent at home, that bright characters loſe much of their ſplendor at a nearer view, and many who fill the world with their fame, excite very little reverence among thoſe that ſurround them in their domeſtick privacies.

To blame or to ſuſpect is eaſy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cauſe doubtful, ſome accuſation is always engendered between idleneſs and malignity. This diſparity of general and familiar eſteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in ſecret, but carefully covered from the publick eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of Alexander, tho' nations fell proſtrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had ſeen him, in the madneſs of wine, murder his friend, or ſet fire to the Perſian palace at the inſtigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of Marlborough kept him in ſubjection to his wife, while he was dreaded by France as her conqueror, and honoured by the Emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice, there muſt be want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true, that when there is want of reverence there is always vice. That awe which great actions or abilities impreſs will be inevitably diminiſhed by acquaintance, though nothing either mean or criminal ſhould be found.

Of men, as of every thing elſe, we muſt judge according to our knowledge. When we ſee of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatneſs. We conſider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the inſtructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the leſs apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual reſpect, and forget, what we ſtill continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But ſuch is the conſtitution of the world, that much of life muſt be ſpent in the ſame manner by the wiſe and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however diſtinguiſhed by external accidents or intrinſick qualities, have all the ſame wants, the ſame pains, and, as far as the ſenſes are conſulted, the ſame pleaſures. The petty cares and petty duties are the ſame in every ſtation to every underſtanding, and every hour brings ſome occaſion on which we all

ſink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dreſſed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph, and the ſage's diſputation, end, like the humble labours of the ſmith or plowman, in a dinner or in ſleep.

Thoſe notions which are to be collected by reaſon in oppoſition to the ſenſes, will ſeldom ſtand forward in the mind, but lie treaſured in the remoter repoſitories of memory, to be found only when they are ſought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will ſcarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not eaſily conſider him as great, whom our own eyes ſhew us to be little; nor labour to keep preſent to our thoughts the latent excellencies of him who ſhares with us all our weakneſſes and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with ſlight amuſements, buſied with trifling employments, and diſturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigencies make them neceſſary. Great exigencies can happen but ſeldom, and therefore thoſe qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind, lie hid, for the moſt part, like ſubterranean treaſures, over which the foot paſſes as on common ground, till neceſſity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebrations of victory, a ſlave was placed on the triumphal car, by the ſide of the general, who reminded him by a ſhort ſentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be leſt a leader, in his paſſage to the Capitol, ſhould forget the frailties of his nature, there was ſurely no need of ſuch an admonition; the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before ſome of his dependants would have forgot his greatneſs, and ſhewn him, that notwithſtanding his laurels he was yet a man.

There are ſome who try to eſcape this domeſtic degradation, by labouring to appear always wiſe or always great; but he that ſtrives againſt nature, will for ever ſtrive in vain. To be grave of mien and ſlow of utterance; to look with ſolicitude and ſpeak with heſitation, is attainable at will; but the ſhew of wiſdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cauſe doubt, as that of valour where there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly conſidered the condition of his being, will contentedly yield to the courſe of things: he will not pant for diſtinction where diſtinction would imply no merit; but though on great occaſions he may wiſh to be greater than others, he will be ſatisfied in common occurrences not to be leſs.

N° LII. SATURDAY, APRIL 14.

RESPONSARE CUPIDINIBUS. HOR.

THE practice of ſelf-denial, or the forbearance of lawful pleaſure, has been conſidered by almoſt every nation, from the remoteſt ages, as the higheſt exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay reſpect and veneration to thoſe who abſtained from the delights of life, even when they did not cenſure thoſe who enjoyed them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confeſſes that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications, but at the expence of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their eſteem on thoſe who prefer intellect to ſenſe, who controul their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and deſires of animal life for rational diſquiſitions of pious contemplations.

The earth has ſcarce a country ſo far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into claſſes, where ſome orders of men or women are not diſtinguiſhed by voluntary ſeverities, and where the reputation of their ſanctity is not increaſed in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactneſs of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of intereſt ſpreads wide and continues long, it may be reaſonably preſumed to have been infuſed by natur

ture or dictated by reaſon. It has been often obſerved that the fictions of impoſture, and illuſions of fancy, ſoon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps it's ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, eaſily becomes ſubject to caprice and imagination; and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principle be right. It cannot be denied that a juſt conviction of the reſtraint neceſſary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and inſtitutions which, however favourably conſidered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of ſelf-denial is not weakened in itſelf by the errors of thoſe who miſinterpret or miſapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the underſtanding is hourly perceived, and the ſtate of thoſe whom ſenſuality has enſlaved, is known to be in the higheſt degree deſpicable and wretched.

The dread of ſuch ſhameful captivity may juſtly raiſe alarms, and wiſdom will endeavour to keep danger at a diſtance. By timely caution and ſuſpicious vigilance thoſe deſires may be repreſſed, to which indulgence would ſoon give abſolute dominion; thoſe enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been a while accuſtomed to victory, can no longer be reſiſted.

Nothing is more fatal to happineſs or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own ſtrength, and by aſſuring us of the power of retreat precipitates us into hazard. Some may ſafely venture further than others into the regions of delight, lay themſelves more open to the golden ſhafts of pleaſure, and advance nearer to the reſidence of the Syrens; but he that is beſt armed with conſtancy and reaſon is yet vulnerable in one part or other; and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he paſſes, he will not eaſily return. It is certainly moſt wiſe, as it is moſt ſafe, to ſtop before he touches the utmoſt limit, ſince every ſtep of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he ſhall at laſt enter the receſſes of voluptuouſneſs, and ſloth and deſpondency cloſe the paſſage behind him.

To deny early and inflexibly, is the only art of checking the importunity of deſire, and of preſerving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications muſt be ſometimes with-held; he that complies with all lawful deſires will certainly loſe his empire over himſelf, and in time either ſubmit his reaſon to his wiſhes, and think all his deſires lawful, or diſmiſs his reaſon as troubleſome and intruſive, and reſolve to ſnatch what he may happen to wiſh, without enquiry about right and wrong.

No man, whoſe appetites are his maſters, can perform the duties of his nature with ſtrictneſs and regularity; he that would be ſuperior to external influences muſt firſt become ſuperior to his own paſſions.

When the Roman general, ſitting at ſupper with a plate of turnips before him, was ſolicited by large preſents to betray his truſt, he aſked the meſſengers whether he that could ſup on turnips was a man likely to ſell his country. Upon him who has reduced his ſenſes to obedience, temptation has loſt it's power; he is able to attend impartially to Virtue, and execute her commands without heſitation.

To ſet the mind above the appetites is the end of abſtinence, which one of the fathers obſerves to be not a virtue, but the ground-work of virtue. By forbearing to do what may innocently be done, we may add hourly new vigour or reſolution, and ſecure the power of reſiſtance when pleaſure or intereſt ſhall lend their charms to guilt.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.